AMERICAN NOTES

by Rudyard Kipling

Introduction

In an issue of the London World in April, 1890, there appeared the following paragraph: "Two small rooms connected by a tiny hall afford sufficient space to contain Mr. Rudyard Kipling, the literary hero of the present hour, 'the man who came from nowhere,' as he says himself, and who a year ago was consciously nothing in the literary world."

Six months previous to this Mr. Kipling, then but twenty-four years old, had arrived in England from India to find that fame had preceded him. He had already gained fame in India, where scores of cultured and critical people, after reading "Departmental Ditties," "Plain Tales from the Hills," and various other stories and verses, had stamped him for a genius.

Fortunately for everybody who reads, London interested and stimulated Mr. Kipling, and he settled down to writing. "The Record of Badalia Herodsfoot," and his first novel, "The Light that Failed," appeared in 1890 and 1891; then a collection of verse, "Life's Handicap, being stories of Mine Own People," was published simultaneously in London and New York City; then followed more verse, and so on through an unending series.

In 1891 Mr. Kipling met the young author Wolcott Balestier, at that time connected with a London publishing house. A strong attachment grew between the two, and several months after their first meeting they came to Mr. Balestier's Vermont home, where they collaborated on "The Naulahka: A Story of West and East," for which The Century paid the largest price ever given by an American magazine for a story. The following year Mr. Kipling married Mr. Balestier's sister in London and brought her to America.

The Balestiers were of an aristocratic New York family; the grandfather of Mrs. Kipling was J. M. Balestier, a prominent lawyer in New York City and Chicago, who died in 1888, leaving a fortune of about a million. Her maternal grandfather was E. Peshine Smith of Rochester, N. Y., a noted author and jurist, who was selected in 1871 by Secretary Hamilton Fish to

go to Japan as the Mikado's adviser in international law. The ancestral home of the Balestiers was near Brattleboro', Vt., and here Mr. Kipling brought his bride. The young Englishman was so impressed by the Vermont scenery that he rented for a time the cottage on the "Bliss Farm," in which Steele Mackaye the playwright wrote the well known drama "Hazel Kirke."

The next spring Mr. Kipling purchased from his brother-in-law, Beatty Balestier, a tract of land about three miles north of Brattleboro', Vt., and on this erected a house at a cost of nearly $50,000, which he named "The Naulahka." This was his home during his sojourn in America. Here he wrote when in the mood, and for recreation tramped abroad over the hills. His social duties at this period were not arduous, for to his home he refused admittance to all but tried friends. He made a study of the Yankee country dialect and character for "The Walking Delegate," and while "Captains Courageous," the story of New England fisher life, was before him he spent some time among the Gloucester fishermen with an acquaintance who had access to the household gods of these people.

He returned to England in August, 1896, and did not visit America again till 1899, when he came with his wife and three children for a limited time.

It is hardly fair to Mr. Kipling to call "American Notes" first impressions, for one reading them will readily see that the impressions are superficial, little thought being put upon the writing. They seem super-sarcastic, and would lead one to believe that Mr. Kipling is antagonistic to America in every respect. This, however, is not true. These "Notes" aroused much protest and severe criticism when they appeared in 1891, and are considered so far beneath Mr. Kipling's real work that they have been nearly suppressed and are rarely found in a list of his writings. Their very caustic style is of interest to a student and lover of Kipling, and for this reason the publishers believe them worthy of a good binding.

G. P. T.

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I. AT THE GOLDEN GATE

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"Serene, indifferent to fate,
Thou sittest at the Western Gate;
Thou seest the white seas fold their tents,
Oh, warder of two continents;
Thou drawest all things, small and great,
To thee, beside the Western Gate."
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THIS is what Bret Harte has written of the great city of San Francisco, and for the past fortnight I have been wondering what made him do it.

There is neither serenity nor indifference to be found in these parts; and evil would it be for the continents whose wardship were intrusted to so reckless a guardian.

Behold me pitched neck-and-crop from twenty days of the high seas into the whirl of California, deprived of any guidance, and left to draw my own conclusions. Protect me from the wrath of an outraged community if these letters be ever read by American eyes! San Francisco is a mad city—inhabited for the most part by perfectly insane people, whose women are of a remarkable beauty.

When the "City of Pekin" steamed through the Golden Gate, I saw with great joy that the block-house which guarded the mouth of the "finest harbor in the world, sir," could be silenced by two gunboats from Hong Kong with safety, comfort, and despatch. Also, there was not a single American vessel of war in the harbor.

This may sound bloodthirsty; but remember, I had come with a grievance upon me—the grievance of the pirated English books.

Then a reporter leaped aboard, and ere I could gasp held me in his toils. He pumped me exhaustively while I was getting ashore, demanding of all things in the world news about Indian journalism. It is an awful thing to enter a new land with a new lie on your lips. I spoke the truth to the evil-minded Custom House man who turned my most sacred raiment on a floor composed of stable refuse and pine splinters; but the reporter

overwhelmed me not so much by his poignant audacity as his beautiful ignorance. I am sorry now that I did not tell him more lies as I passed into a city of three hundred thousand white men. Think of it! Three hundred thousand white men and women gathered in one spot, walking upon real pavements in front of plate-glass-windowed shops, and talking something that at first hearing was not very different from English. It was only when I had tangled myself up in a hopeless maze of small wooden houses, dust, street refuse, and children who played with empty kerosene tins, that I discovered the difference of speech.

"You want to go to the Palace Hotel?" said an affable youth on a dray. "What in hell are you doing here, then? This is about the lowest ward in the city. Go six blocks north to corner of Geary and Markey, then walk around till you strike corner of Gutter and Sixteenth, and that brings you there."

I do not vouch for the literal accuracy of these directions, quoting but from a disordered memory.

"Amen," I said. "But who am I that I should strike the corners of such as you name? Peradventure they be gentlemen of repute, and might hit back. Bring it down to dots, my son."

I thought he would have smitten me, but he didn't. He explained that no one ever used the word "street," and that every one was supposed to know how the streets ran, for sometimes the names were upon the lamps and sometimes they weren't. Fortified with these directions, I proceeded till I found a mighty street, full of sumptuous buildings four and five stories high, but paved with rude cobblestones, after the fashion of the year 1.

Here a tram-car, without any visible means of support, slid stealthily behind me and nearly struck me in the back. This was the famous cable car of San Francisco, which runs by gripping an endless wire rope sunk in the ground, and of which I will tell you more anon. A hundred yards further there was a slight commotion in the street, a gathering together of three or four, something that glittered as it moved very swiftly. A ponderous Irish gentleman, with priest's cords in his hat and a small nickel-plated badge on his fat bosom, emerged from the knot supporting a Chinaman who had been stabbed in the eye and was bleeding like a pig. The by-standers went

their ways, and the Chinaman, assisted by the policeman, his own. Of course this was none of my business, but I rather wanted to know what had happened to the gentleman who had dealt the stab. It said a great deal for the excellence of the municipal arrangement of the town that a surging crowd did not at once block the street to see what was going forward. I was the sixth man and the last who assisted at the performance, and my curiosity was six times the greatest. Indeed, I felt ashamed of showing it.

There were no more incidents till I reached the Palace Hotel, a seven-storied warren of humanity with a thousand rooms in it. All the travel books will tell you about hotel arrangements in this country. They should be seen to be appreciated. Understand clearly—and this letter is written after a thousand miles of experiences—that money will not buy you service in the West. When the hotel clerk—the man who awards your room to you and who is supposed to give you information—when that resplendent individual stoops to attend to your wants he does so whistling or humming or picking his teeth, or pauses to converse with some one he knows. These performances, I gather, are to impress upon you that he is a free man and your equal. From his general appearance and the size of his diamonds he ought to be your superior. There is no necessity for this swaggering self-consciousness of freedom. Business is business, and the man who is paid to attend to a man might reasonably devote his whole attention to the job. Out of office hours he can take his coach and four and pervade society if he pleases.

In a vast marble-paved hall, under the glare of an electric light, sat forty or fifty men, and for their use and amusement were provided spittoons of infinite capacity and generous gape. Most of the men wore frock-coats and top-hats—the things that we in India put on at a wedding-breakfast, if we possess them—but they all spat. They spat on principle. The spittoons were on the staircases, in each bedroom—yea, and in chambers even more sacred than these. They chased one into retirement, but they blossomed in chiefest splendor round the bar, and they were all used, every reeking one of them.

Just before I began to feel deathly sick another reporter grappled me. What he wanted to know was the precise area of India in square miles. I referred him to Whittaker. He had never heard of Whittaker. He wanted it

from my own mouth, and I would not tell him. Then he swerved off, just like the other man, to details of journalism in our own country. I ventured to suggest that the interior economy of a paper most concerned the people who worked it.

"That's the very thing that interests us," he said. "Have you got reporters anything like our reporters on Indian newspapers?"

"We have not," I said, and suppressed the "thank God" rising to my lips.

"Why haven't you?" said he.

"Because they would die," I said.

It was exactly like talking to a child—a very rude little child. He would begin almost every sentence with, "Now tell me something about India," and would turn aimlessly from one question to the other without the least continuity. I was not angry, but keenly interested. The man was a revelation to me. To his questions I returned answers mendacious and evasive. After all, it really did not matter what I said. He could not understand. I can only hope and pray that none of the readers of the "Pioneer" will ever see that portentous interview. The man made me out to be an idiot several sizes more drivelling than my destiny intended, and the rankness of his ignorance managed to distort the few poor facts with which I supplied him into large and elaborate lies. Then, thought I, "the matter of American journalism shall be looked into later on. At present I will enjoy myself."

No man rose to tell me what were the lions of the place. No one volunteered any sort of conveyance. I was absolutely alone in this big city of white folk. By instinct I sought refreshment, and came upon a barroom full of bad Salon pictures in which men with hats on the backs of their heads were wolfing food from a counter. It was the institution of the "free lunch" I had struck. You paid for a drink and got as much as you wanted to eat. For something less than a rupee a day a man can feed himself sumptuously in San Francisco, even though he be a bankrupt. Remember this if ever you are stranded in these parts.

Later I began a vast but unsystematic exploration of the streets. I asked for no names. It was enough that the pavements were full of white men

and women, the streets clanging with traffic, and that the restful roar of a great city rang in my ears. The cable cars glided to all points of the compass at once. I took them one by one till I could go no further. San Francisco has been pitched down on the sand bunkers of the Bikaneer desert. About one fourth of it is ground reclaimed from the sea—any old-timers will tell you all about that. The remainder is just ragged, unthrifty sand hills, to-day pegged down by houses.

From an English point of view there has not been the least attempt at grading those hills, and indeed you might as well try to grade the hillocks of Sind. The cable cars have for all practical purposes made San Francisco a dead level. They take no count of rise or fall, but slide equably on their appointed courses from one end to the other of a six-mile street. They turn corners almost at right angles, cross other lines, and for aught I know may run up the sides of houses. There is no visible agency of their flight, but once in awhile you shall pass a five-storied building humming with machinery that winds up an everlasting wire cable, and the initiated will tell you that here is the mechanism. I gave up asking questions. If it pleases Providence to make a car run up and down a slit in the ground for many miles, and if for twopence halfpenny I can ride in that car, why shall I seek the reasons of the miracle? Rather let me look out of the windows till the shops give place to thousands and thousands of little houses made of wood (to imitate stone), each house just big enough for a man and his family. Let me watch the people in the cars and try to find out in what manner they differ from us, their ancestors.

It grieves me now that I cursed them (in the matter of book piracy), because I perceived that my curse is working and that their speech is becoming a horror already. They delude themselves into the belief that they talk English—the English—and I have already been pitied for speaking with "an English accent." The man who pitied me spoke, so far as I was concerned, the language of thieves. And they all do. Where we put the accent forward they throw it back, and vice versa where we give the long "a" they use the short, and words so simple as to be past mistaking they pronounce somewhere up in the dome of their heads. How do these things happen?

Oliver Wendell Holmes says that the Yankee school-marm, the cider and the salt codfish of the Eastern States, are responsible for what he calls a nasal accent. I know better. They stole books from across the water without paying for 'em, and the snort of delight was fixed in their nostrils forever by a just Providence. That is why they talk a foreign tongue to-day.

"Cats is dogs, and rabbits is dogs, and so's parrots. But this 'ere tortoise is an insect, so there ain't no charge," as the old porter said.

A Hindoo is a Hindoo and a brother to the man who knows his vernacular. And a Frenchman is French because he speaks his own language. But the American has no language. He is dialect, slang, provincialism, accent, and so forth. Now that I have heard their voices, all the beauty of Bret Harte is being ruined for me, because I find myself catching through the roll of his rhythmical prose the cadence of his peculiar fatherland. Get an American lady to read to you "How Santa Claus Came to Simpson's Bar," and see how much is, under her tongue, left of the beauty of the original.

But I am sorry for Bret Harte. It happened this way. A reporter asked me what I thought of the city, and I made answer suavely that it was hallowed ground to me, because of Bret Harte. That was true.

"Well," said the reporter, "Bret Harte claims California, but California don't claim Bret Harte. He's been so long in England that he's quite English. Have you seen our cracker factories or the new offices of the 'Examiner'?"

He could not understand that to the outside world the city was worth a great deal less than the man. I never intended to curse the people with a provincialism so vast as this.

But let us return to our sheep—which means the sea-lions of the Cliff House. They are the great show of San Francisco. You take a train which pulls up the middle of the street (it killed two people the day before yesterday, being unbraked and driven absolutely regardless of consequences), and you pull up somewhere at the back of the city on the Pacific beach. Originally the cliffs and their approaches must have been pretty, but they have been so carefully defiled with advertisements that

they are now one big blistered abomination. A hundred yards from the shore stood a big rock covered with the carcasses of the sleek sea-beasts, who roared and rolled and walloped in the spouting surges. No bold man had painted the creatures sky-blue or advertised newspapers on their backs, wherefore they did not match the landscape, which was chiefly hoarding. Some day, perhaps, whatever sort of government may obtain in this country will make a restoration of the place and keep it clean and neat. At present the sovereign people, of whom I have heard so much already, are vending cherries and painting the virtues of "Little Bile Beans" all over it.

Night fell over the Pacific, and the white sea-fog whipped through the streets, dimming the splendors of the electric lights. It is the use of this city, her men and women folk, to parade between the hours of eight and ten a certain street called Cairn Street, where the finest shops are situated. Here the click of high heels on the pavement is loudest, here the lights are brightest, and here the thunder of the traffic is most overwhelming. I watched Young California, and saw that it was, at least, expensively dressed, cheerful in manner, and self-asserting in conversation. Also the women were very fair. Perhaps eighteen days aboard ship had something to do with my unreserved admiration. The maidens were of generous build, large, well groomed, and attired in raiment that even to my inexperienced eyes must have cost much. Cairn Street at nine o'clock levels all distinctions of rank as impartially as the grave. Again and again I loitered at the heels of a couple of resplendent beings, only to overhear, when I expected the level voice of culture, the staccato "Sez he," "Sez I" that is the mark of the white servant-girl all the world over.

This was depressing because, in spite of all that goes to the contrary, fine feathers ought to make fine birds. There was wealth—unlimited wealth—in the streets, but not an accent that would not have been dear at fifty cents. Wherefore, revolving in my mind that these folk were barbarians, I was presently enlightened and made aware that they also were the heirs of all the ages, and civilized after all. There appeared before me an affable stranger of prepossessing appearance, with a blue and an innocent eye. Addressing me by name, he claimed to have met me in New York, at the Windsor, and to this claim I gave a qualified assent. I did not

remember the fact, but since he was so certain of it, why, then—I waited developments.

"And what did you think of Indiana when you came through?" was the next question.

It revealed the mystery of previous acquaintance and one or two other things. With reprehensible carelessness my friend of the light-blue eye had looked up the name of his victim in the hotel register, and read "Indiana" for India.

The provincialism with which I had cursed his people extended to himself. He could not imagine an Englishman coming through the States from west to east instead of by the regularly ordained route. My fear was that in his delight in finding me so responsive he would make remarks about New York and the Windsor which I could not understand. And, indeed, he adventured in this direction once or twice, asking me what I thought of such and such streets, which from his tone I gathered to be anything but respectable. It is trying to talk unknown New York in almost unknown San Francisco. But my friend was merciful. He protested that I was one after his own heart, and pressed upon me rare and curious drinks at more than one bar. These drinks I accepted with gratitude, as also the cigars with which his pockets were stored. He would show me the life of the city. Having no desire to watch a weary old play again, I evaded the offer and received in lieu of the devil's instruction much coarse flattery. Curiously constituted is the soul of man. Knowing how and where this man lied, waiting idly for the finale, I was distinctly conscious, as he bubbled compliments in my ear, of soft thrills of gratified pride stealing from hat-rim to boot-heels. I was wise, quoth he—anybody could see that with half an eye; sagacious, versed in the ways of the world, an acquaintance to be desired; one who had tasted the cup of life with discretion.

All this pleased me, and in a measure numbed the suspicion that was thoroughly aroused. Eventually the blue-eyed one discovered, nay, insisted, that I had a taste for cards (this was clumsily worked in, but it was my fault, for in that I met him half-way and allowed him no chance of good acting). Hereupon I laid my head upon one side and simulated unholy

wisdom, quoting odds and ends of poker talk, all ludicrously misapplied. My friend kept his countenance admirably, and well he might, for five minutes later we arrived, always by the purest of chance, at a place where we could play cards and also frivol with Louisiana State Lottery tickets. Would I play?

"Nay," said I, "for to me cards have neither meaning nor continuity; but let us assume that I am going to play. How would you and your friends get to work? Would you play a straight game, or make me drunk, or—well, the fact is, I'm a newspaper man, and I'd be much obliged if you'd let me know something about bunco steering."

My blue-eyed friend erected himself into an obelisk of profanity. He cursed me by his gods—the right and left bower; he even cursed the very good cigars he had given me. But, the storm over, he quieted down and explained. I apologized for causing him to waste an evening, and we spent a very pleasant time together.

Inaccuracy, provincialism, and a too hasty rushing to conclusions, were the rocks that he had split on, but he got his revenge when he said:—"How would I play with you? From all the poppycock Anglice bosh you talked about poker, I'd ha' played a straight game, and skinned you. I wouldn't have taken the trouble to make you drunk. You never knew anything of the game, but how I was mistaken in going to work on you, makes me sick."

He glared at me as though I had done him an injury. To-day I know how it is that year after year, week after week, the bunco steerer, who is the confidence trick and the card-sharper man of other climes, secures his prey. He clavers them over with flattery as the snake clavers the rabbit. The incident depressed me because it showed I had left the innocent East far behind and was come to a country where a man must look out for himself. The very hotels bristled with notices about keeping my door locked and depositing my valuables in a safe. The white man in a lump is bad. Weeping softly for O-Toyo (little I knew then that my heart was to be torn afresh from my bosom) I fell asleep in the clanging hotel.

Next morning I had entered upon the deferred inheritance. There are no princes in America—at least with crowns on their heads—but a generous-minded member of some royal family received my letter of introduction.

Ere the day closed I was a member of the two clubs, and booked for many engagements to dinner and party. Now, this prince, upon whose financial operations be continual increase, had no reason, nor had the others, his friends, to put himself out for the sake of one Briton more or less, but he rested not till he had accomplished all in my behalf that a mother could think of for her debutante daughter.

Do you know the Bohemian Club of San Francisco? They say its fame extends over the world. It was created, somewhat on the lines of the Savage, by men who wrote or drew things, and has blossomed into most unrepublican luxury. The ruler of the place is an owl—an owl standing upon a skull and cross-bones, showing forth grimly the wisdom of the man of letters and the end of his hopes for immortality. The owl stands on the staircase, a statue four feet high; is carved in the wood-work, flutters on the frescoed ceiling, is stamped on the note-paper, and hangs on the walls. He is an ancient and honorable bird. Under his wing 'twas my privilege to meet with white men whose lives were not chained down to routine of toil, who wrote magazine articles instead of reading them hurriedly in the pauses of office-work, who painted pictures instead of contenting themselves with cheap etchings picked up at another man's sale of effects. Mine were all the rights of social intercourse, craft by craft, that India, stony-hearted step-mother of collectors, has swindled us out of. Treading soft carpets and breathing the incense of superior cigars, I wandered from room to room studying the paintings in which the members of the club had caricatured themselves, their associates, and their aims. There was a slick French audacity about the workmanship of these men of toil unbending that went straight to the heart of the beholder. And yet it was not altogether French. A dry grimness of treatment, almost Dutch, marked the difference. The men painted as they spoke—with certainty. The club indulges in revelries which it calls "jinks"—high and low, at intervals—and each of these gatherings is faithfully portrayed in oils by hands that know their business. In this club were no amateurs spoiling canvas, because they fancied they could handle oils without knowledge of shadows or anatomy—no gentleman of leisure ruining the temper of publishers and an already ruined market with attempts to write "because everybody writes something these days."

My hosts were working, or had worked for their daily bread with pen or paint, and their talk for the most part was of the shop—shoppy—that is to say, delightful. They extended a large hand of welcome, and were as brethren, and I did homage to the owl and listened to their talk. An Indian club about Christmas-time will yield, if properly worked, an abundant harvest of queer tales; but at a gathering of Americans from the uttermost ends of their own continent, the tales are larger, thicker, more spinous, and even more azure than any Indian variety. Tales of the war I heard told by an ex-officer of the South over his evening drink to a colonel of the Northern army, my introducer, who had served as a trooper in the Northern Horse, throwing in emendations from time to time. "Tales of the Law," which in this country is an amazingly elastic affair, followed from the lips of a judge. Forgive me for recording one tale that struck me as new. It may interest the up-country Bar in India.

Once upon a time there was Samuelson, a young lawyer, who feared not God, neither regarded the Bench. (Name, age, and town of the man were given at great length.) To him no case had ever come as a client, partly because he lived in a district where lynch law prevailed, and partly because the most desperate prisoner shrunk from intrusting himself to the mercies of a phenomenal stammerer. But in time there happened an aggravated murder—so bad, indeed, that by common consent the citizens decided, as a prelude to lynching, to give the real law a chance. They could, in fact, gambol round that murder. They met—the court in its shirt-sleeves—and against the raw square of the Court House window a temptingly suggestive branch of a tree fretted the sky. No one appeared for the prisoner, and, partly in jest, the court advised young Samuelson to take up the case.

"The prisoner is undefended, Sam," said the court. "The square thing to do would be for you to take him aside and do the best you can for him."

Court, jury, and witness then adjourned to the veranda, while Samuelson led his client aside to the Court House cells. An hour passed ere the lawyer returned alone. Mutely the audience questioned.

"May it p-p-please the c-court," said Samuel-son, "my client's case is a b-b-b-bad one—a d-d-amn bad one. You told me to do the b-b-best I c-

could for him, judge, so I've jest given him y-your b-b-bay gelding, an' told him to light out for healthier c-climes, my p-p-professional opinion being he'd be hanged quicker'n h-h-hades if he dallied here. B-by this time my client's 'bout fifteen mile out yonder somewheres. That was the b-b-best I could do for him, may it p-p-please the court."

The young man, escaping punishment in lieu of the prisoner, made his fortune ere five years.

Other voices followed, with equally wondrous tales of riata-throwing in Mexico and Arizona, of gambling at army posts in Texas, of newspaper wars waged in godless Chicago (I could not help being interested, but they were not pretty tricks), of deaths sudden and violent in Montana and Dakota, of the loves of half-breed maidens in the South, and fantastic huntings for gold in mysterious Alaska. Above all, they told the story of the building of old San Francisco, when the "finest collection of humanity on God's earth, sir, started this town, and the water came up to the foot of Market Street." Very terrible were some of the tales, grimly humorous the others, and the men in broadcloth and fine linen who told them had played their parts in them.

"And now and again when things got too bad they would toll the city bell, and the Vigilance Committee turned out and hanged the suspicious characters. A man didn't begin to be suspected in those days till he had committed at least one unprovoked murder," said a calm-eyed, portly old gentleman.

I looked at the pictures around me, the noiseless, neat-uniformed waiter behind me, the oak-ribbed ceiling above, the velvet carpet beneath. It was hard to realize that even twenty years ago you could see a man hanged with great pomp. Later on I found reason to change my opinion. The tales gave me a headache and set me thinking. How in the world was it possible to take in even one thousandth of this huge, roaring, many-sided continent? In the tobacco-scented silence of the sumptuous library lay Professor Bryce's book on the American Republic.

"It is an omen," said I. "He has done all things in all seriousness, and he may be purchased for half a guinea. Those who desire information of the most undoubted, must refer to his pages. For me is the daily round of

vagabondage, the recording of the incidents of the hour and intercourse with the travelling-companion of the day. I will not 'do' this country at all."

And I forgot all about India for ten days while I went out to dinners and watched the social customs of the people, which are entirely different from our customs, and was introduced to men of many millions. These persons are harmless in their earlier stages—that is to say, a man worth three or four million dollars may be a good talker, clever, amusing, and of the world; a man with twice that amount is to be avoided, and a twenty million man is—just twenty millions. Take an instance. I was speaking to a newspaper man about seeing the proprietor of his journal, as in my innocence I supposed newspaper men occasionally did. My friend snorted indignantly:—"See him! Great Scott! No. If he happens to appear in the office, I have to associate with him; but, thank Heaven! outside of that I move in circles where he cannot come."

And yet the first thing I have been taught to believe is that money was everything in America!

II. AMERICAN POLITICS

I HAVE been watching machinery in repose after reading about machinery in action.

An excellent gentleman, who bears a name honored in the magazine, writes, much as Disraeli orated, of "the sublime instincts of an ancient people," the certainty with which they can be trusted to manage their own affairs in their own way, and the speed with which they are making for all sorts of desirable goals. This he called a statement or purview of American politics.

I went almost directly afterward to a saloon where gentlemen interested in ward politics nightly congregate. They were not pretty persons. Some of them were bloated, and they all swore cheerfully till the heavy gold watch-chains on their fat stomachs rose and fell again; but they talked over their liquor as men who had power and unquestioned access to places of trust and profit.

The magazine writer discussed theories of government; these men the practice. They had been there. They knew all about it. They banged their fists on the table and spoke of political "pulls," the vending of votes, and so forth. Theirs was not the talk of village babblers reconstructing the affairs of the nation, but of strong, coarse, lustful men fighting for spoil, and thoroughly understanding the best methods of reaching it.

I listened long and intently to speech I could not understand—or but in spots.

It was the speech of business, however. I had sense enough to know that, and to do my laughing outside the door.

Then I began to understand why my pleasant and well-educated hosts in San Francisco spoke with a bitter scorn of such duties of citizenship as voting and taking an interest in the distribution of offices. Scores of men have told me, without false pride, that they would as soon concern

themselves with the public affairs of the city or state as rake muck with a steam-shovel. It may be that their lofty disdain covers selfishness, but I should be very sorry habitually to meet the fat gentlemen with shiny top-hats and plump cigars in whose society I have been spending the evening.

Read about politics as the cultured writer of the magazine regards 'em, and then, and not till then, pay your respects to the gentlemen who run the grimy reality.

I'm sick of interviewing night editors who lean their chair against the wall, and, in response to my demand for the record of a prominent citizen, answer: "Well, you see, he began by keeping a saloon," etc. I prefer to believe that my informants are treating me as in the old sinful days in India I was used to treat the wandering globe-trotter. They declare that they speak the truth, and the news of dog politics lately vouchsafed to me in groggeries inclines me to believe, but I won't. The people are much too nice to slangander as recklessly as I have been doing.

Besides, I am hopelessly in love with about eight American maidens—all perfectly delightful till the next one comes into the room.

O-Toyo was a darling, but she lacked several things—conversation for one. You cannot live on giggles. She shall remain unmarried at Nagasaki, while I roast a battered heart before the shrine of a big Kentucky blonde, who had for a nurse when she was little a negro "mammy."

By consequence she has welded on California beauty, Paris dresses, Eastern culture, Europe trips, and wild Western originality, the queer, dreamy superstitions of the quarters, and the result is soul-shattering. And she is but one of many stars.

Item, a maiden who believes in education and possesses it, with a few hundred thousand dollars to boot and a taste for slumming.

Item, the leader of a sort of informal salon where girls congregate, read papers, and daringly discuss metaphysical problems and candy—a sloe-eyed, black-browed, imperious maiden she.

Item, a very small maiden, absolutely without reverence, who can in one swift sentence trample upon and leave gasping half a dozen young men.

Item, a millionairess, burdened with her money, lonely, caustic, with a tongue keen as a sword, yearning for a sphere, but chained up to the rock of her vast possessions.

Item, a typewriter maiden earning her own bread in this big city, because she doesn't think a girl ought to be a burden on her parents, who quotes Theophile Gautier and moves through the world manfully, much respected for all her twenty inexperienced summers.

Item, a woman from cloud-land who has no history in the past or future, but is discreetly of the present, and strives for the confidences of male humanity on the grounds of "sympathy" (methinks this is not altogether a new type).

Item, a girl in a "dive," blessed with a Greek head and eyes, that seem to speak all that is best and sweetest in the world. But woe is me! She has no ideas in this world or the next beyond the consumption of beer (a commission on each bottle), and protests that she sings the songs allotted to her nightly without more than the vaguest notion of their meaning.

Sweet and comely are the maidens of Devonshire; delicate and of gracious seeming those who live in the pleasant places of London; fascinating for all their demureness the damsels of France, clinging closely to their mothers, with large eyes wondering at the wicked world; excellent in her own place and to those who understand her is the Anglo-Indian "spin" in her second season; but the girls of America are above and beyond them all. They are clever, they can talk—yea, it is said that they think. Certainly they have an appearance of so doing which is delightfully deceptive.

They are original, and regard you between the brows with unabashed eyes as a sister might look at her brother. They are instructed, too, in the folly and vanity of the male mind, for they have associated with "the boys" from babyhood, and can discerningly minister to both vices or pleasantly snub the possessor. They possess, moreover, a life among themselves, independent of any masculine associations. They have societies and clubs and unlimited tea-fights where all the guests are girls. They are self-possessed, without parting with any tenderness that is their sex-right; they understand; they can take care of themselves; they are superbly

independent. When you ask them what makes them so charming, they say:—"It is because we are better educated than your girls, and—and we are more sensible in regard to men. We have good times all round, but we aren't taught to regard every man as a possible husband. Nor is he expected to marry the first girl he calls on regularly."

Yes, they have good times, their freedom is large, and they do not abuse it. They can go driving with young men and receive visits from young men to an extent that would make an English mother wink with horror, and neither driver nor drivee has a thought beyond the enjoyment of a good time. As certain, also, of their own poets have said:—

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"Man is fire and woman is tow,
And the devil he comes and begins to blow."
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In America the tow is soaked in a solution that makes it fire-proof, in absolute liberty and large knowledge; consequently, accidents do not exceed the regular percentage arranged by the devil for each class and climate under the skies.

But the freedom of the young girl has its drawbacks. She is—I say it with all reluctance—irreverent, from her forty-dollar bonnet to the buckles in her eighteen-dollar shoes. She talks flippantly to her parents and men old enough to be her grandfather. She has a prescriptive right to the society of the man who arrives. The parents admit it.

This is sometimes embarrassing, especially when you call on a man and his wife for the sake of information—the one being a merchant of varied knowledge, the other a woman of the world. In five minutes your host has vanished. In another five his wife has followed him, and you are left alone with a very charming maiden, doubtless, but certainly not the person you came to see. She chatters, and you grin, but you leave with the very strong impression of a wasted morning. This has been my experience once or twice. I have even said as pointedly as I dared to a man:—"I came to see you."

"You'd better see me in my office, then. The house belongs to my women folk—to my daughter, that is to say."

He spoke the truth. The American of wealth is owned by his family. They exploit him for bullion. The women get the ha'pence, the kicks are all his own. Nothing is too good for an American's daughter (I speak here of the moneyed classes).

The girls take every gift as a matter of course, and yet they develop greatly when a catastrophe arrives and the man of many millions goes up or goes down, and his daughters take to stenography or typewriting. I have heard many tales of heroism from the lips of girls who counted the principals among their friends. The crash came, Mamie, or Hattie, or Sadie, gave up their maid, their carriages and candy, and with a No. 2 Remington and a stout heart set about earning their daily bread.

"And did I drop her from the list of my friends? No, sir," said a scarlet-lipped vision in white lace; "that might happen to us any day."

It may be this sense of possible disaster in the air that makes San Francisco society go with so captivating a rush and whirl. Recklessness is in the air. I can't explain where it comes from, but there it is. The roaring winds of the Pacific make you drunk to begin with. The aggressive luxury on all sides helps out the intoxication, and you spin forever "down the ringing grooves of change" (there is no small change, by the way, west of the Rockies) as long as money lasts. They make greatly and they spend lavishly; not only the rich, but the artisans, who pay nearly five pounds for a suit of clothes, and for other luxuries in proportion.

The young men rejoice in the days of their youth. They gamble, yacht, race, enjoy prize-fights and cock-fights, the one openly, the other in secret; they establish luxurious clubs; they break themselves over horse-flesh and other things, and they are instant in a quarrel. At twenty they are experienced in business, embark in vast enterprises, take partners as experienced as themselves, and go to pieces with as much splendor as their neighbors. Remember that the men who stocked California in the fifties were physically, and, as far as regards certain tough virtues, the pick of the earth. The inept and the weakly died en route, or went under in the days of construction. To this nucleus were added all the races of the Continent—French, Italian, German, and, of course, the Jew.

The result you can see in the large-boned, deep-chested, delicate-handed women, and long, elastic, well-built boys. It needs no little golden badge swinging from the watch-chain to mark the native son of the golden West, the country-bred of California.

Him I love because he is devoid of fear, carries himself like a man, and has a heart as big as his books. I fancy, too, he knows how to enjoy the blessings of life that his province so abundantly bestows upon him. At least, I heard a little rat of a creature with hock-bottle shoulders explaining that a man from Chicago could pull the eye-teeth of a Californian in business.

Well, if I lived in fairy-land, where cherries were as big as plums, plums as big as apples, and strawberries of no account, where the procession of the fruits of the seasons was like a pageant in a Drury Lane pantomime and the dry air was wine, I should let business slide once in a way and kick up my heels with my fellows. The tale of the resources of California—vegetable and mineral—is a fairy-tale. You can read it in books. You would never believe me.

All manner of nourishing food, from sea-fish to beef, may be bought at the lowest prices, and the people are consequently well-developed and of a high stomach. They demand ten shillings for tinkering a jammed lock of a trunk; they receive sixteen shillings a day for working as carpenters; they spend many sixpences on very bad cigars, which the poorest of them smoke, and they go mad over a prize-fight. When they disagree they do so fatally, with fire-arms in their hands, and on the public streets. I was just clear of Mission Street when the trouble began between two gentlemen, one of whom perforated the other.

When a policeman, whose name I do not recollect, "fatally shot Ed Hearney" for attempting to escape arrest, I was in the next street. For these things I am thankful. It is enough to travel with a policeman in a tram-car, and, while he arranges his coat-tails as he sits down, to catch sight of a loaded revolver. It is enough to know that fifty per cent of the men in the public saloons carry pistols about them.

The Chinaman waylays his adversary, and methodically chops him to pieces with his hatchet. Then the press roars about the brutal ferocity of

the pagan.

The Italian reconstructs his friend with a long knife. The press complains of the waywardness of the alien.

The Irishman and the native Californian in their hours of discontent use the revolver, not once, but six times. The press records the fact, and asks in the next column whether the world can parallel the progress of San Francisco. The American who loves his country will tell you that this sort of thing is confined to the lower classes. Just at present an ex-judge who was sent to jail by another judge (upon my word I cannot tell whether these titles mean anything) is breathing red-hot vengeance against his enemy. The papers have interviewed both parties, and confidently expect a fatal issue.

Now, let me draw breath and curse the negro waiter, and through him the negro in service generally. He has been made a citizen with a vote, consequently both political parties play with him. But that is neither here nor there. He will commit in one meal every betise that a senllion fresh from the plow-tail is capable of, and he will continue to repeat those faults. He is as complete a heavy-footed, uncomprehending, bungle-fisted fool as any mem-sahib in the East ever took into her establishment. But he is according to law a free and independent citizen—consequently above reproof or criticism. He, and he alone, in this insane city, will wait at table (the Chinaman doesn't count).

He is untrained, inept, but he will fill the place and draw the pay. Now, God and his father's fate made him intellectually inferior to the Oriental. He insists on pretending that he serves tables by accident—as a sort of amusement. He wishes you to understand this little fact. You wish to eat your meals, and, if possible, to have them properly served. He is a big, black, vain baby and a man rolled into one.

A colored gentleman who insisted on getting me pie when I wanted something else, demanded information about India. I gave him some facts about wages.

"Oh, hell!" said he, cheerfully, "that wouldn't keep me in cigars for a month."

Then he fawned on me for a ten-cent piece. Later he took it upon himself to pity the natives of India. "Heathens," he called them—this woolly one, whose race has been the butt of every comedy on the native stage since the beginning. And I turned and saw by the head upon his shoulders that he was a Yoruba man, if there be any truth in ethnological castes. He did his thinking in English, but he was a Yoruba negro, and the race type had remained the same throughout his generations. And the room was full of other races—some that looked exactly like Gallas (but the trade was never recruited from that side of Africa), some duplicates of Cameroon heads, and some Kroomen, if ever Kroomen wore evening dress.

The American does not consider little matters of descent, though by this time he ought to know all about "damnable heredity." As a general rule he keeps himself very far from the negro, and says things about him that are not pretty. There are six million negroes, more or less, in the States, and they are increasing. The American, once having made them citizens, cannot unmake them. He says, in his newspapers, they ought to be elevated by education. He is trying this, but it is likely to be a long job, because black blood is much more adhesive than white, and throws back with annoying persistence. When the negro gets religion he returns directly as a hiving bee to the first instincts of his people. Just now a wave of religion is sweeping over some of the Southern States.

Up to the present two Messiahs and a Daniel have appeared, and several human sacrifices have been offered up to these incarnations. The Daniel managed to get three young men, who he insisted were Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to walk into a blast furnace, guaranteeing non-combustion. They did not return. I have seen nothing of this kind, but I have attended a negro church. They pray, or are caused to pray by themselves in this country. The congregation were moved by the spirit to groans and tears, and one of them danced up the aisle to the mourners' bench. The motive may have been genuine. The movements of the shaken body were those of a Zanzibar stick dance, such as you see at Aden on the coal-boats, and even as I watched the people, the links that bound them to the white man snapped one by one, and I saw before me the hubshi (woolly hair) praying to a God he did not understand. Those neatly dressed folk on

the benches, and the gray-headed elder by the window, were savages, neither more nor less.

What will the American do with the negro? The South will not consort with him. In some States miscegenation is a penal offence. The North is every year less and less in need of his services.

And he will not disappear. He will continue as a problem. His friends will urge that he is as good as the white man. His enemies—well, you can guess what his enemies will do from a little incident that followed on a recent appointment by the President. He made a negro an assistant in a post-office where—think of it!—he had to work at the next desk to a white girl, the daughter of a colonel, one of the first families of Georgia's modern chivalry, and all the weary, weary rest of it. The Southern chivalry howled, and hanged or burned some one in effigy. Perhaps it was the President, and perhaps it was the negro—but the principle remains the same. They said it was an insult. It is not good to be a negro in the land of the free and the home of the brave.

But this is nothing to do with San Francisco and her merry maidens, her strong, swaggering men, and her wealth of gold and pride. They bore me to a banquet in honor of a brave lieutenant—Carlin, of the "Vandalia"—who stuck by his ship in the great cyclone at Apia and comported himself as an officer should. On that occasion—'twas at the Bohemian Club—I heard oratory with the roundest of o's, and devoured a dinner the memory of which will descend with me into the hungry grave.

There were about forty speeches delivered, and not one of them was average or ordinary. It was my first introduction to the American eagle screaming for all it was worth. The lieutenant's heroism served as a peg from which the silver-tongued ones turned themselves loose and kicked.

They ransacked the clouds of sunset, the thunderbolts of heaven, the deeps of hell, and the splendor of the resurrection for tropes and metaphors, and hurled the result at the head of the guest of the evening.

Never since the morning stars sung together for joy, I learned, had an amazed creation witnessed such superhuman bravery as that displayed by the American navy in the Samoa cyclone. Till earth rotted in the

phosphorescent star-and-stripe slime of a decayed universe, that god-like gallantry would not be forgotten. I grieve that I cannot give the exact words. My attempt at reproducing their spirit is pale and inadequate. I sat bewildered on a coruscating Niagara of blatherum-skite. It was magnificent—it was stupendous—and I was conscious of a wicked desire to hide my face in a napkin and grin. Then, according to rule, they produced their dead, and across the snowy tablecloths dragged the corpse of every man slain in the Civil War, and hurled defiance at "our natural enemy" (England, so please you), "with her chain of fortresses across the world." Thereafter they glorified their nation afresh from the beginning, in case any detail should have been overlooked, and that made me uncomfortable for their sakes. How in the world can a white man, a sahib, of our blood, stand up and plaster praise on his own country? He can think as highly as he likes, but this open-mouthed vehemence of adoration struck me almost as indelicate. My hosts talked for rather more than three hours, and at the end seemed ready for three hours more.

But when the lieutenant—such a big, brave, gentle giant—rose to his feet, he delivered what seemed to me as the speech of the evening. I remember nearly the whole of it, and it ran something in this way: —"Gentlemen—It's very good of you to give me this dinner and to tell me all these pretty-things, but what I want you to understand—the fact is, what we want and what we ought to get at once, is a navy—more ships—lots of 'em—"

Then we howled the top of the roof off, and I for one fell in love with Carlin on the spot. Wallah! He was a man.

The prince among merchants bid me take no heed to the warlike sentiments of some of the old generals.

"The sky-rockets are thrown in for effect," quoth he, "and whenever we get on our hind legs we always express a desire to chaw up England. It's a sort of family affair."

And, indeed, when you come to think of it, there is no other country for the American public speaker to trample upon.

France has Germany; we have Russia; for Italy Austria is provided; and the humblest Pathan possesses an ancestral enemy.

Only America stands out of the racket, and therefore to be in fashion makes a sand-bag of the mother country, and hangs her when occasion requires.

"The chain of fortresses" man, a fascinating talker, explained to me after the affair that he was compelled to blow off steam. Everybody expected it.

When we had chanted "The Star Spangled Banner" not more than eight times, we adjourned. America is a very great country, but it is not yet heaven, with electric lights and plush fittings, as the speakers professed to believe. My listening mind went back to the politicians in the saloon, who wasted no time in talking about freedom, but quietly made arrangements to impose their will on the citizens.

"The judge is a great man, but give thy presents to the clerk," as the proverb saith.

And what more remains to tell? I cannot write connectedly, because I am in love with all those girls aforesaid, and some others who do not appear in the invoice. The typewriter is an institution of which the comic papers make much capital, but she is vastly convenient. She and a companion rent a room in a business quarter, and, aided by a typewriting machine, copy MSS. at the rate of six annas a page. Only a woman can operate a typewriting machine, because she has served apprenticeship to the sewing machine. She can earn as much as one hundred dollars a month, and professes to regard this form of bread-winning as her natural destiny. But, oh! how she hates it in her heart of hearts! When I had got over the surprise of doing business with and trying to give orders to a young woman of coldly, clerkly aspect intrenched behind gold-rimmed spectacles, I made inquiries concerning the pleasures of this independence. They liked it—indeed they did. 'Twas the natural fate of almost all girls—the recognized custom in America—and I was a barbarian not to see it in that light.

"Well, and after?" said I. "What happens?"

"We work for our bread."

"And then what do you expect?"

"Then we shall work for our bread."

"Till you die?"

"Ye-es—unless—"

"Unless what? This is your business, you know. A man works until he dies."

"So shall we"—this without enthusiasm—"I suppose."

Said the partner in the firm, audaciously:—"Sometimes we marry our employees—at least, that's what the newspapers say."

The hand banged on half a dozen of the keys of the machine at once. "Yet I don't care. I hate it—I hate it—I hate it—and you needn't look so!"

The senior partner was regarding the rebel with grave-eyed reproach.

"I thought you did," said I. "I don't suppose American girls are much different from English ones in instinct."

"Isn't it Theophile Gautier who says that the only difference between country and country lie in the slang and the uniform of the police?"

Now, in the name of all the gods at once, what is one to say to a young lady (who in England would be a person) who earns her own bread, and very naturally hates the employ, and slings out-of-the-way quotations at your head? That one falls in love with her goes without saying, but that is not enough.

A mission should be established.

III. AMERICAN SALMON

The race is neither to the swift nor the battle to the strong; but time and chance cometh to all.

I HAVE lived!

The American Continent may now sink under the sea, for I have taken the best that it yields, and the best was neither dollars, love, nor real estate.

Hear now, gentlemen of the Punjab Fishing Club, who whip the reaches of the Tavi, and you who painfully import trout over to Octamund, and I will tell you how old man California and I went fishing, and you shall envy.

We returned from The Dalles to Portland by the way we had come, the steamer stopping en route to pick up a night's catch of one of the salmon wheels on the river, and to deliver it at a cannery downstream.

When the proprietor of the wheel announced that his take was two thousand two hundred and thirty pounds weight of fish, "and not a heavy catch neither," I thought he lied. But he sent the boxes aboard, and I counted the salmon by the hundred—huge fifty-pounders hardly dead, scores of twenty and thirty pounders, and a host of smaller fish. They were all Chenook salmon, as distinguished from the "steel head" and the "silver side." That is to say, they were royal salmon, and California and I dropped a tear over them, as monarchs who deserved a better fate; but the lust of slaughter entered into our souls, and we talked fish and forgot the mountain scenery that had so moved us a day before.

The steamer halted at a rude wooden warehouse built on piles in a lonely reach of the river, and sent in the fish. I followed them up a scale-strewn, fishy incline that led to the cannery. The crazy building was quivering with the machinery on its floors, and a glittering bank of tin

scraps twenty feet high showed where the waste was thrown after the cans had been punched.

Only Chinamen were employed on the work, and they looked like blood-besmeared yellow devils as they crossed the rifts of sunlight that lay upon the floor. When our consignment arrived, the rough wooden boxes broke of themselves as they were dumped down under a jet of water, and the salmon burst out in a stream of quicksilver. A Chinaman jerked up a twenty-pounder, beheaded and detailed it with two swift strokes of a knife, flicked out its internal arrangements with a third, and case it into a blood-dyed tank. The headless fish leaped from under his hands as though they were facing a rapid. Other Chinamen pulled them from the vat and thrust them under a thing like a chaff-cutter, which, descending, hewed them into unseemly red gobbets fit for the can.

More Chinamen, with yellow, crooked fingers, jammed the stuff into the cans, which slid down some marvellous machine forthwith, soldering their own tops as they passed. Each can was hastily tested for flaws, and then sunk with a hundred companions into a vat of boiling water, there to be half cooked for a few minutes. The cans bulged slightly after the operation, and were therefore slidden along by the trolleyful to men with needles and soldering-irons who vented them and soldered the aperture. Except for the label, the "Finest Columbia Salmon" was ready for the market. I was impressed not so much with the speed of the manufacture as the character of the factory. Inside, on a floor ninety by forty, the most civilized and murderous of machinery. Outside, three footsteps, the thick-growing pines and the immense solitude of the hills. Our steamer only stayed twenty minutes at that place, but I counted two hundred and forty finished cans made from the catch of the previous night ere I left the slippery, blood-stained, scale-spangled, oily floors and the offal-smeared Chinamen.

We reached Portland, California and I crying for salmon, and a real-estate man, to whom we had been intrusted by an insurance man, met us in the street, saying that fifteen miles away, across country, we should come upon a place called Clackamas, where we might perchance find what we desired. And California, his coat-tails flying in the wind, ran to a livery-stable and chartered a wagon and team forthwith. I could push the wagon

about with one hand, so light was its structure. The team was purely American—that is to say, almost human in its intelligence and docility. Some one said that the roads were not good on the way to Clackamas, and warned us against smashing the springs. "Portland," who had watched the preparations, finally reckoned "He'd come along, too;" and under heavenly skies we three companions of a day set forth, California carefully lashing our rods into the carriage, and the by-standers overwhelming us with directions as to the saw-mills we were to pass, the ferries we were to cross, and the sign-posts we were to seek signs from. Half a mile from this city of fifty thousand souls we struck (and this must be taken literally) a plank road that would have been a disgrace to an Irish village.

Then six miles of macadamized road showed us that the team could move. A railway ran between us and the banks of the Willamette, and another above us through the mountains. All the land was dotted with small townships, and the roads were full of farmers in their town wagons, bunches of tow-haired, boggle-eyed urchins sitting in the hay behind. The men generally looked like loafers, but their women were all well dressed.

Brown braiding on a tailor-made jacket does not, however, consort with hay-wagons. Then we struck into the woods along what California called a camina reale—a good road—and Portland a "fair track." It wound in and out among fire-blackened stumps under pine-trees, along the corners of log fences, through hollows, which must be hopeless marsh in the winter, and up absurd gradients. But nowhere throughout its length did I see any evidence of road-making. There was a track—you couldn't well get off it, and it was all you could do to stay on it. The dust lay a foot thick in the blind ruts, and under the dust we found bits of planking and bundles of brushwood that sent the wagon bounding into the air. The journey in itself was a delight. Sometimes we crashed through bracken; anon, where the blackberries grew rankest, we found a lonely little cemetery, the wooden rails all awry and the pitiful, stumpy head-stones nodding drunkenly at the soft green mullions. Then, with oaths and the sound of rent underwood, a yoke of mighty bulls would swing down a "skid" road, hauling a forty-foot log along a rudely made slide.

A valley full of wheat and cherry-trees succeeded, and halting at a house, we bought ten-pound weight of luscious black cherries for

something less than a rupee, and got a drink of icy-cold water for nothing, while the untended team browsed sagaciously by the road-side. Once we found a way-side camp of horse-dealers lounging by a pool, ready for a sale or a swap, and once two sun-tanned youngsters shot down a hill on Indian ponies, their full creels banging from the high-pommelled saddle. They had been fishing, and were our brethren, therefore. We shouted aloud in chorus to scare a wild cat; we squabbled over the reasons that had led a snake to cross a road; we heaved bits of bark at a venturesome chipmunk, who was really the little gray squirrel of India, and had come to call on me; we lost our way, and got the wagon so beautifully fixed on a khud-bound road that we had to tie the two hind wheels to get it down.

Above all, California told tales of Nevada and Arizona, of lonely nights spent out prospecting, the slaughter of deer and the chase of men, of woman—lovely woman—who is a firebrand in a Western city and leads to the popping of pistols, and of the sudden changes and chances of Fortune, who delights in making the miner or the lumber-man a quadruplicate millionaire and in "busting" the railroad king.

That was a day to be remembered, and it had only begun when we drew rein at a tiny farm-house on the banks of the Clackamas and sought horse feed and lodging, ere we hastened to the river that broke over a weir not a quarter of a mile away. Imagine a stream seventy yards broad divided by a pebbly island, running over seductive "riffles" and swirling into deep, quiet pools, where the good salmon goes to smoke his pipe after meals. Get such a stream amid fields of breast-high crops surrounded by hills of pines, throw in where you please quiet water, long-fenced meadows, and a hundred-foot bluff just to keep the scenery from growing too monotonous, and you will get some faint notion of the Clackamas. The weir had been erected to pen the Chenook salmon from going further up-stream. We could see them, twenty or thirty pounds, by the score in the deep pools, or flying madly against the weir and foolishly skinning their noses. They were not our prey, for they would not rise at a fly, and we knew it. All the same, when one made his leap against the weir, and landed on the foot-plank with a jar that shook the board I was standing on, I would fain have claimed him for my own capture.

Portland had no rod. He held the gaff and the whiskey. California sniffed up-stream and down-stream, across the racing water, chose his ground, and let the gaudy fly drop in the tail of a riffle. I was getting my rod together, when I heard the joyous shriek of the reel and the yells of California, and three feet of living silver leaped into the air far across the water. The forces were engaged.

The salmon tore up-stream, the tense line cutting the water like a tide-rip behind him, and the light bamboo bowed to breaking. What happened thereafter I cannot tell. California swore and prayed, and Portland shouted advice, and I did all three for what appeared to be half a day, but was in reality a little over a quarter of an hour, and sullenly our fish came home with spurts of temper, dashes head on and sarabands in the air, but home to the bank came he, and the remorseless reel gathered up the thread of his life inch by inch. We landed him in a little bay, and the spring weight in his gorgeous gills checked at eleven and one half pounds. Eleven and one half pounds of fighting salmon! We danced a war-dance on the pebbles, and California caught me round the waist in a hug that went near to breaking my ribs, while he shouted:—"Partner! Partner! This is glory! Now you catch your fish! Twenty-four years I've waited for this!"

I went into that icy-cold river and made my cast just above the weir, and all but foul-hooked a blue-and-black water-snake with a coral mouth who coiled herself on a stone and hissed male-dictions.

The next cast—ah, the pride of it, the regal splendor of it! the thrill that ran down from finger-tip to toe! Then the water boiled. He broke for the fly and got it. There remained enough sense in me to give him all he wanted when he jumped not once, but twenty times, before the up-stream flight that ran my line out to the last half-dozen turns, and I saw the nickelled reel-bar glitter under the thinning green coils. My thumb was burned deep when I strove to stopper the line.

I did not feel it till later, for my soul was out in the dancing weir, praying for him to turn ere he took my tackle away. And the prayer was heard. As I bowed back, the butt of the rod on my left hip-bone and the top joint dipping like unto a weeping willow, he turned and accepted each inch of slack that I could by any means get in as a favor from on high. There lie

several sorts of success in this world that taste well in the moment of enjoyment, but I question whether the stealthy theft of line from an able-bodied salmon who knows exactly what you are doing and why you are doing it is not sweeter than any other victory within human scope. Like California's fish, he ran at me head on, and leaped against the line, but the Lord gave me two hundred and fifty pairs of fingers in that hour. The banks and the pine-trees danced dizzily round me, but I only reeled—reeled as for life—reeled for hours, and at the end of the reeling continued to give him the butt while he sulked in a pool. California was further up the reach, and with the corner of my eye I could see him casting with long casts and much skill. Then he struck, and my fish broke for the weir in the same instant, and down the reach we came, California and I, reel answering reel even as the morning stars sing together.

The first wild enthusiasm of capture had died away. We were both at work now in deadly earnest to prevent the lines fouling, to stall off a down-stream rush for shaggy water just above the weir, and at the same time to get the fish into the shallow bay down-stream that gave the best practicable landing. Portland bid us both be of good heart, and volunteered to take the rod from my hands.

I would rather have died among the pebbles than surrender my right to play and land a salmon, weight unknown, with an eight-ounce rod. I heard California, at my ear, it seemed, gasping: "He's a fighter from Fightersville, sure!" as his fish made a fresh break across the stream. I saw Portland fall off a log fence, break the overhanging bank, and clatter down to the pebbles, all sand and landing-net, and I dropped on a log to rest for a moment. As I drew breath the weary hands slackened their hold, and I forgot to give him the butt.

A wild scutter in the water, a plunge, and a break for the head-waters of the Clackamas was my reward, and the weary toil of reeling in with one eye under the water and the other on the top joint of the rod was renewed. Worst of all, I was blocking California's path to the little landing bay aforesaid, and he had to halt and tire his prize where he was.

"The father of all the salmon!" he shouted. "For the love of Heaven, get your trout to bank, Johnny Bull!"

But I could do no more. Even the insult failed to move me. The rest of the game was with the salmon. He suffered himself to be drawn, skip-ping with pretended delight at getting to the haven where I would fain bring him. Yet no sooner did he feel shoal water under his ponderous belly than he backed like a torpedo-boat, and the snarl of the reel told me that my labor was in vain. A dozen times, at least, this happened ere the line hinted he had given up the battle and would be towed in. He was towed. The landing-net was useless for one of his size, and I would not have him gaffed. I stepped into the shallows and heaved him out with a respectful hand under the gill, for which kindness he battered me about the legs with his tail, and I felt the strength of him and was proud. California had taken my place in the shallows, his fish hard held. I was up the bank lying full length on the sweet-scented grass and gasping in company with my first salmon caught, played and landed on an eight-ounce rod. My hands were cut and bleeding, I was dripping with sweat, spangled like a harlequin with scales, water from my waist down, nose peeled by the sun, but utterly, supremely, and consummately happy.

The beauty, the darling, the daisy, my Salmon Bahadur, weighed twelve pounds, and I had been seven-and-thirty minutes bringing him to bank! He had been lightly hooked on the angle of the right jaw, and the hook had not wearied him. That hour I sat among princes and crowned heads greater than them all. Below the bank we heard California scuffling with his salmon and swearing Spanish oaths. Portland and I assisted at the capture, and the fish dragged the spring balance out by the roots. It was only constructed to weigh up to fifteen pounds. We stretched the three fish on the grass—the eleven and a half, the twelve and fifteen pounder—and we gave an oath that all who came after should merely be weighed and put back again.

How shall I tell the glories of that day so that you may be interested? Again and again did California and I prance down that reach to the little bay, each with a salmon in tow, and land him in the shallows. Then Portland took my rod and caught some ten-pounders, and my spoon was carried away by an unknown leviathan. Each fish, for the merits of the three that had died so gamely, was hastily hooked on the balance and flung back. Portland recorded the weight in a pocket-book, for he was a real-estate man. Each fish fought for all he was worth, and none more savagely

than the smallest, a game little six-pounder. At the end of six hours we added up the list. Read it. Total: Sixteen fish; aggregate weight, one hundred and forty pounds. The score in detail runs something like this—it is only interesting to those concerned: fifteen, eleven and a half, twelve, ten, nine and three quarters, eight, and so forth; as I have said, nothing under six pounds, and three ten-pounders.

Very solemnly and thankfully we put up our rods—it was glory enough for all time—and returned weeping in each other's arms, weeping tears of pure joy, to that simple, bare-legged family in the packing-case house by the water-side.

The old farmer recollected days and nights of fierce warfare with the Indians "way back in the fifties," when every ripple of the Columbia River and her tributaries hid covert danger. God had dowered him with a queer, crooked gift of expression and a fierce anxiety for the welfare of his two little sons—tanned and reserved children, who attended school daily and spoke good English in a strange tongue.

His wife was an austere woman, who had once been kindly, and perhaps handsome.

Very many years of toil had taken the elasticity out of step and voice. She looked for nothing better than everlasting work—the chafing detail of housework—and then a grave somewhere up the hill among the blackberries and the pines.

But in her grim way she sympathized with her eldest daughter, a small and silent maiden of eighteen, who had thoughts very far from the meals she tended and the pans she scoured.

We stumbled into the household at a crisis, and there was a deal of downright humanity in that same. A bad, wicked dress-maker had promised the maiden a dress in time for a to-morrow's rail-way journey, and though the barefooted Georgy, who stood in very wholesome awe of his sister, had scoured the woods on a pony in search, that dress never arrived. So, with sorrow in her heart and a hundred Sister-Anne glances up the road, she waited upon the strangers and, I doubt not, cursed them for the wants that stood between her and her need for tears. It was a genuine

little tragedy. The mother, in a heavy, passionless voice, rebuked her impatience, yet sat up far into the night, bowed over a heap of sewing for the daughter's benefit.

These things I beheld in the long marigold-scented twilight and whispering night, loafing round the little house with California, who unfolded himself like a lotus to the moon, or in the little boarded bunk that was our bedroom, swap-ping tales with Portland and the old man.

Most of the yarns began in this way:—"Red Larry was a bull-puncher back of Lone County, Montana," or "There was a man riding the trail met a jack-rabbit sitting in a cactus," or "'Bout the time of the San Diego land boom, a woman from Monterey," etc.

You can try to piece out for yourselves what sort of stories they were.

IV. THE YELLOWSTONE

ONCE upon a time there was a carter who brought his team and a friend into the Yellowstone Park without due thought. Presently they came upon a few of the natural beauties of the place, and that carter turned his team into his friend's team, howling:—"Get out o' this, Jim. All hell's alight under our noses!"

And they called the place Hell's Half-Acre to this day to witness if the carter lied.

We, too, the old lady from Chicago, her husband, Tom, and the good little mares, came to Hell's Half-Acre, which is about sixty acres in extent, and when Tom said:—"Would you like to drive over it?"

We said:—"Certainly not, and if you do we shall report you to the park authorities."

There was a plain, blistered, peeled, and abominable, and it was given over to the sportings and spoutings of devils who threw mud, and steam, and dirt at each other with whoops, and halloos, and bellowing curses.

The places smelled of the refuse of the pit, and that odor mixed with the clean, wholesome aroma of the pines in our nostrils throughout the day.

This Yellowstone Park is laid out like Ollendorf, in exercises of progressive difficulty. Hell's Half-Acre was a prelude to ten or twelve miles of geyser formation.

We passed hot streams boiling in the forest; saw whiffs of steam beyond these, and yet other whiffs breaking through the misty green hills in the far distance; we trampled on sulphur in crystals, and sniffed things much worse than any sulphur which is known to the upper world; and so journeying, bewildered with the novelty, came upon a really park-like place where Tom suggested we should get out and play with the geysers on foot.

Imagine mighty green fields splattered with lime-beds, all the flowers of the summer growing up to the very edge of the lime. That was our first glimpse of the geyser basins.

The buggy had pulled up close to a rough, broken, blistered cone of spelter stuff between ten and twenty feet high. There was trouble in that place—moaning, splashing, gurgling, and the clank of machinery. A spurt of boiling water jumped into the air, and a wash of water followed.

I removed swiftly. The old lady from Chicago shrieked. "What a wicked waste!" said her husband.

I think they call it the Riverside Geyser. Its spout was torn and ragged like the mouth of a gun when a shell has burst there. It grumbled madly for a moment or two, and then was still. I crept over the steaming lime—it was the burning marl on which Satan lay—and looked fearfully down its mouth. You should never look a gift geyser in the mouth.

I beheld a horrible, slippery, slimy funnel with water rising and falling ten feet at a time. Then the water rose to lip level with a rush, and an infernal bubbling troubled this Devil's Bethesda before the sullen heave of the crest of a wave lapped over the edge and made me run.

Mark the nature of the human soul! I had begun with awe, not to say terror, for this was my first experience of such things. I stepped back from the banks of the Riverside Geyser, saying:—"Pooh! Is that all it can do?"

Yet for aught I knew, the whole thing might have blown up at a minute's notice, she, he, or it being an arrangement of uncertain temper.

We drifted on, up that miraculous valley. On either side of us were hills from a thousand or fifteen hundred feet high, wooded from crest to heel. As far as the eye could range forward were columns of steam in the air, misshapen lumps of lime, mist-like preadamite monsters, still pools of turquoise-blue stretches of blue corn-flowers, a river that coiled on itself twenty times, pointed bowlders of strange colors, and ridges of glaring, staring white.

A moon-faced trooper of German extraction—never was park so carefully patrolled—came up to inform us that as yet we had not seen any

of the real geysers; that they were all a mile or so up the valley, and tastefully scattered round the hotel in which we would rest for the night.

America is a free country, but the citizens look down on the soldier. I had to entertain that trooper. The old lady from Chicago would have none of him; so we loafed alone together, now across half-rotten pine logs sunk in swampy ground, anon over the ringing geyser formation, then pounding through river-sand or brushing knee-deep through long grass.

"And why did you enlist?" said I.

The moon-faced one's face began to work. I thought he would have a fit, but he told me a story instead—such a nice tale of a naughty little girl who wrote pretty love letters to two men at once. She was a simple village wife, but a wicked "family novelette" countess couldn't have accomplished her ends better. She drove one man nearly wild with the pretty little treachery, and the other man abandoned her and came West to forget the trickery.

Moon-face was that man.

We rounded and limped over a low spur of hill, and came out upon a field of aching, snowy lime rolled in sheets, twisted into knots, riven with rents, and diamonds, and stars, stretching for more than half a mile in every direction.

On this place of despair lay most of the big, bad geysers who know when there is trouble in Krakatoa, who tell the pines when there is a cyclone on the Atlantic seaboard, and who are exhibited to visitors under pretty and fanciful names.

The first mound that I encountered belonged to a goblin who was splashing in his tub.

I heard him kick, pull a shower-bath on his shoulders, gasp, crack his joints, and rub himself down with a towel; then he let the water out of the bath, as a thoughtful man should, and it all sunk down out of sight till another goblin arrived.

So we looked and we wondered at the Beehive, whose mouth is built up exactly like a hive, at the Turban (which is not in the least like a turban), and at many, many other geysers, hot holes, and springs. Some of them rumbled, some hissed, some went off spasmodically, and others lay dead still in sheets of sapphire and beryl.

Would you believe that even these terrible creatures have to be guarded by the troopers to prevent the irreverent Americans from chipping the cones to pieces, or, worse still, making the geyser sick? If you take a small barrel full of soft-soap and drop it down a geyser's mouth, that geyser will presently be forced to lay all before you, and for days afterward will be of an irritated and inconstant stomach.

When they told me the tale I was filled with sympathy. Now I wish that I had soft-soap and tried the experiment on some lonely little beast far away in the woods. It sounds so probable and so human.

Yet he would be a bold man who would administer emetics to the Giantess. She is flat-lipped, having no mouth; she looks like a pool, fifty feet long and thirty wide, and there is no ornamentation about her. At irregular intervals she speaks and sends up a volume of water over two hundred feet high to begin with, then she is angry for a day and a half—sometimes for two days.

Owing to her peculiarity of going mad in the night, not many people have seen the Giantess at her finest; but the clamor of her unrest, men say, shakes the wooden hotel, and echoes like thunder among the hills.

The congregation returned to the hotel to put down their impressions in diaries and note-books, which they wrote up ostentatiously in the verandas. It was a sweltering hot day, albeit we stood some-what higher than the level of Simla, and I left that raw pine creaking caravansary for the cool shade of a clump of pines between whose trunks glimmered tents.

A batch of United States troopers came down the road and flung themselves across the country into their rough lines. The Mexican cavalryman can ride, though he keeps his accoutrements pig-fashion and his horse cow-fashion.

I was free of that camp in five minutes—free to play with the heavy, lumpy carbines, have the saddles stripped, and punch the horses knowingly in the ribs. One of the men had been in the fight with "Wrap-up-his-Tail," and he told me how that great chief, his horse's tail tied up in red calico, swaggered in front of the United States cavalry, challenging all to single combat. But he was slain, and a few of his tribe with him.

"There's no use in an Indian, anyway," concluded my friend.

A couple of cow-boys—real cow-boys—jingled through the camp amid a shower of mild chaff. They were on their way to Cook City, I fancy, and I know that they never washed. But they were picturesque ruffians exceedingly, with long spurs, hooded stirrups, slouch hats, fur weather-cloth over their knees, and pistol-butts just easy to hand.

"The cow-boy's goin' under before long," said my friend. "Soon as the country's settled up he'll have to go. But he's mighty useful now. What would we do without the cow-boy?"

"As how?" said I, and the camp laughed.

"He has the money. We have the skill. He comes in winter to play poker at the military posts. We play poker—a few. When he's lost his money we make him drunk and let him go. Sometimes we get the wrong man."

And he told me a tale of an innocent cow-boy who turned up, cleaned out, at an army post, and played poker for thirty-six hours. But it was the post that was cleaned out when that long-haired Caucasian removed himself, heavy with everybody's pay and declining the proffered liquor.

"Noaw," said the historian, "I don't play with no cow-boy unless he's a little bit drunk first."

Ere I departed I gathered from more than one man the significant fact that up to one hundred yards he felt absolutely secure behind his revolver.

"In England, I understand," quoth the limber youth from the South,—"in England a man isn't allowed to play with no fire-arms. He's got to be taught all that when he enlists. I didn't want much teaching how to shoot

straight 'fore I served Uncle Sam. And that's just where it is. But you was talking about your Horse Guards now?"

I explained briefly some peculiarities of equipment connected with our crackest crack cavalry. I grieve to say the camp roared.

"Take 'em over swampy ground. Let 'em run around a bit an' work the starch out of 'em, an' then, Almighty, if we wouldn't plug 'em at ease I'd eat their horses."

There was a maiden—a very little maiden—who had just stepped out of one of James's novels. She owned a delightful mother and an equally delightful father—a heavy-eyed, slow-voiced man of finance. The parents thought that their daughter wanted change.

She lived in New Hampshire. Accordingly, she had dragged them up to Alaska and to the Yosemite Valley, and was now returning leisurely, via the Yellowstone, just in time for the tail-end of the summer season at Saratoga.

We had met once or twice before in the park, and I had been amazed and amused at her critical commendation of the wonders that she saw. From that very resolute little mouth I received a lecture on American literature, the nature and inwardness of Washington society, the precise value of Cable's works as compared with Uncle Remus Harris, and a few other things that had nothing whatever to do with geysers, but were altogether pleasant.

Now, an English maiden who had stumbled on a dust-grimed, lime-washed, sun-peeled, collarless wanderer come from and going to goodness knows where, would, her mother inciting her and her father brandishing an umbrella, have regarded him as a dissolute adventurer—a person to be disregarded.

Not so those delightful people from New Hampshire. They were good enough to treat him—it sounds almost incredible—as a human being, possibly respectable, probably not in immediate need of financial assistance.

Papa talked pleasantly and to the point.

The little maiden strove valiantly with the accent of her birth and that of her rearing, and mamma smiled benignly in the background.

Balance this with a story of a young English idiot I met mooning about inside his high collar, attended by a valet. He condescended to tell me that "you can't be too careful who you talk to in these parts." And stalked on, fearing, I suppose, every minute for his social chastity.

That man was a barbarian (I took occasion to tell him so), for he comported himself after the manner of the head-hunters and hunted of Assam who are at perpetual feud one with another.

You will understand that these foolish stories are introduced in order to cover the fact that this pen cannot describe the glories of the Upper Geyser Basin. The evening I spent under the lee of the Castle Geyser, sitting on a log with some troopers and watching a baronial keep forty feet high spouting hot water. If the Castle went off first, they said the Giantess would be quiet, and vice versa, and then they told tales till the moon got up and a party of campers in the woods gave us all something to eat.

Then came soft, turfy forest that deadened the wheels, and two troopers on detachment duty stole noiselessly behind us. One was the Wrap-up-his-Tail man, and they talked merrily while the half-broken horses bucked about among the trees. And so a cavalry escort was with us for a mile, till we got to a mighty hill strewn with moss agates, and everybody had to jump out and pant in that thin air. But how intoxicating it was! The old lady from Chicago ducked like an emancipated hen as she scuttled about the road, cramming pieces of rock into her reticule. She sent me fifty yards down to the hill-side to pick up a piece of broken bottle which she insisted was moss agate.

"I've some o' that at home, an' they shine. Yes, you go get it, young man."

As we climbed the long path the road grew viler and viler till it became, without disguise, the bed of a torrent; and just when things were at their rockiest we nearly fell into a little sapphire lake—but never sapphire was so blue—called Mary's Lake; and that between eight and nine thousand feet above the sea.

Afterward, grass downs, all on a vehement slope, so that the buggy, following the new-made road, ran on the two off-wheels mostly till we dipped head-first into a ford, climbed up a cliff, raced along down, dipped again, and pulled up dishevelled at "Larry's" for lunch and an hour's rest.

Then we lay on the grass and laughed with sheer bliss of being alive. This have I known once in Japan, once on the banks of the Columbia, what time the salmon came in and California howled, and once again in the Yellowstone by the light of the eyes of the maiden from New Hampshire. Four little pools lay at my elbow, one was of black water (tepid), one clear water (cold), one clear water (hot), one red water (boiling). My newly washed handkerchief covered them all, and we two marvelled as children marvel.

"This evening we shall do the Grand Canyon of the Yellowstone," said the maiden.

"Together?" said I; and she said, "Yes."

The sun was beginning to sink when we heard the roar of falling waters and came to a broad river along whose banks we ran. And then—I might at a pinch describe the infernal regions, but not the other place. The Yellowstone River has occasion to run through a gorge about eight miles long. To get to the bottom of the gorge it makes two leaps, one of about one hundred and twenty and the other of three hundred feet. I investigated the upper or lesser fall, which is close to the hotel.

Up to that time nothing particular happens to the Yellowstone—its banks being only rocky, rather steep, and plentifully adorned with pines.

At the falls it comes round a corner, green, solid, ribbed with a little foam, and not more than thirty yards wide. Then it goes over, still green, and rather more solid than before. After a minute or two, you, sitting upon a rock directly above the drop, begin to understand that something has occurred; that the river has jumped between solid cliff walls, and that the gentle froth of water lapping the sides of the gorge below is really the outcome of great waves.

And the river yells aloud; but the cliffs do not allow the yells to escape.

That inspection began with curiosity and finished in terror, for it seemed that the whole world was sliding in chrysolite from under my feet. I followed with the others round the corner to arrive at the brink of the canyon. We had to climb up a nearly perpendicular ascent to begin with, for the ground rises more than the river drops. Stately pine woods fringe either lip of the gorge, which is the gorge of the Yellowstone. You'll find all about it in the guide books.

All that I can say is that without warning or preparation I looked into a gulf seventeen hundred feet deep, with eagles and fish-hawks circling far below. And the sides of that gulf were one wild welter of color—crimson, emerald, cobalt, ochre, amber, honey splashed with port wine, snow white, vermilion, lemon, and silver gray in wide washes. The sides did not fall sheer, but were graven by time, and water, and air into monstrous heads of kings, dead chiefs—men and women of the old time. So far below that no sound of its strife could reach us, the Yellowstone River ran a finger-wide strip of jade green.

The sunlight took those wondrous walls and gave fresh hues to those that nature had already laid there.

Evening crept through the pines that shadowed us, but the full glory of the day flamed in that canyon as we went out very cautiously to a jutting piece of rock—blood-red or pink it was—that overhung the deepest deeps of all.

Now I know what it is to sit enthroned amid the clouds of sunset as the spirits sit in Blake's pictures. Giddiness took away all sensation of touch or form, but the sense of blinding color remained.

When I reached the mainland again I had sworn that I had been floating.

The maid from New Hampshire said no word for a very long time. Then she quoted poetry, which was perhaps the best thing she could have done.

"And to think that this show-place has been going on all these days an' none of we ever saw it," said the old lady from Chicago, with an acid glance at her husband.

"No, only the Injians," said he, unmoved; and the maiden and I laughed.

Inspiration is fleeting, beauty is vain, and the power of the mind for wonder limited. Though the shining hosts themselves had risen choiring from the bottom of the gorge, they would not have prevented her papa and one baser than he from rolling stones down those stupendous rainbow-washed slides. Seventeen hundred feet of steep-est pitch and rather more than seventeen hundred colors for log or bowlder to whirl through!

So we heaved things and saw them gather way and bound from white rock to red or yellow, dragging behind them torrents of color, till the noise of their descent ceased and they bounded a hundred yards clear at the last into the Yellowstone.

"I've been down there," said Tom, that evening. "It's easy to get down if you're careful—just sit an' slide; but getting up is worse. An' I found down below there two stones just marked with a picture of the canyon. I wouldn't sell these rocks not for fifteen dollars."

And papa and I crawled down to the Yellowstone—just above the first little fall—to wet a line for good luck. The round moon came up and turned the cliffs and pines into silver; and a two-pound trout came up also, and we slew him among the rocks, nearly tumbling into that wild river.

. . . . . .

Then out and away to Livingstone once more. The maiden from New Hampshire disappeared, papa and mamma with her. Disappeared, too, the old lady from Chicago, and the others.

V. CHICAGO

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"I know thy cunning and thy greed,
Thy hard high lust and wilful deed,
And all thy glory loves to tell
Of specious gifts material."
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I HAVE struck a city—a real city—and they call it Chicago.

The other places do not count. San Francisco was a pleasure-resort as well as a city, and Salt Lake was a phenomenon.

This place is the first American city I have encountered. It holds rather more than a million of people with bodies, and stands on the same sort of soil as Calcutta. Having seen it, I urgently desire never to see it again. It is inhabited by savages. Its water is the water of the Hooghly, and its air is dirt. Also it says that it is the "boss" town of America.

I do not believe that it has anything to do with this country. They told me to go to the Palmer House, which is overmuch gilded and mirrored, and there I found a huge hall of tessellated marble crammed with people talking about money, and spitting about everywhere. Other barbarians charged in and out of this inferno with letters and telegrams in their hands, and yet others shouted at each other. A man who had drunk quite as much as was good for him told me that this was "the finest hotel in the finest city on God Almighty's earth." By the way, when an American wishes to indicate the next country or state, he says, "God A'mighty's earth." This prevents discussion and flatters his vanity.

Then I went out into the streets, which are long and flat and without end. And verily it is not a good thing to live in the East for any length of time. Your ideas grow to clash with those held by every right-thinking man. I looked down interminable vistas flanked with nine, ten, and fifteen-storied houses, and crowded with men and women, and the show impressed me with a great horror.

Except in London—and I have forgotten what London was like—I had never seen so many white people together, and never such a collection of miserables. There was no color in the street and no beauty—only a maze of wire ropes overhead and dirty stone flagging under foot.

A cab-driver volunteered to show me the glory of the town for so much an hour, and with him I wandered far. He conceived that all this turmoil and squash was a thing to be reverently admired, that it was good to huddle men together in fifteen layers, one atop of the other, and to dig holes in the ground for offices.

He said that Chicago was a live town, and that all the creatures hurrying by me were engaged in business. That is to say they were trying to make some money that they might not die through lack of food to put into their bellies. He took me to canals as black as ink, and filled with un-told abominations, and bid me watch the stream of traffic across the bridges.

He then took me into a saloon, and while I drank made me note that the floor was covered with coins sunk in cement. A Hottentot would not have been guilty of this sort of barbarism. The coins made an effect pretty enough, but the man who put them there had no thought of beauty, and, therefore, he was a savage.

Then my cab-driver showed me business blocks gay with signs and studded with fantastic and absurd advertisements of goods, and looking down the long street so adorned, it was as though each vender stood at his door howling:—"For the sake of my money, employ or buy of me, and me only!"

Have you ever seen a crowd at a famine-relief distribution? You know then how the men leap into the air, stretching out their arms above the crowd in the hope of being seen, while the women dolorously slap the stomachs of their children and whimper. I had sooner watch famine relief than the white man engaged in what he calls legitimate competition. The one I understand. The other makes me ill.

And the cabman said that these things were the proof of progress, and by that I knew he had been reading his newspaper, as every intelligent American should. The papers tell their clientele in language fitted to their

comprehension that the snarling together of telegraph-wires, the heaving up of houses, and the making of money is progress.

I spent ten hours in that huge wilderness, wandering through scores of miles of these terrible streets and jostling some few hundred thousand of these terrible people who talked paisa bat through their noses.

The cabman left me; but after awhile I picked up another man, who was full of figures, and into my ears he poured them as occasion required or the big blank factories suggested. Here they turned out so many hundred thousand dollars' worth of such and such an article; there so many million other things; this house was worth so many million dollars; that one so many million, more or less. It was like listening to a child babbling of its hoard of shells. It was like watching a fool playing with buttons. But I was expected to do more than listen or watch. He demanded that I should admire; and the utmost that I could say was:—"Are these things so? Then I am very sorry for you."

That made him angry, and he said that insular envy made me unresponsive. So, you see, I could not make him understand.

About four and a half hours after Adam was turned out of the Garden of Eden he felt hungry, and so, bidding Eve take care that her head was not broken by the descending fruit, shinned up a cocoanut-palm. That hurt his legs, cut his breast, and made him breathe heavily, and Eve was tormented with fear lest her lord should miss his footing, and so bring the tragedy of this world to an end ere the curtain had fairly risen. Had I met Adam then, I should have been sorry for him. To-day I find eleven hundred thousand of his sons just as far advanced as their father in the art of getting food, and immeasurably inferior to him in that they think that their palm-trees lead straight to the skies. Consequently, I am sorry in rather more than a million different ways.

In the East bread comes naturally, even to the poorest, by a little scratching or the gift of a friend not quite so poor. In less favored countries one is apt to forget. Then I went to bed. And that was on a Saturday night.

Sunday brought me the queerest experiences of all—a revelation of barbarism complete. I found a place that was officially described as a church. It was a circus really, but that the worshippers did not know. There were flowers all about the building, which was fitted up with plush and stained oak and much luxury, including twisted brass candlesticks of severest Gothic design.

To these things and a congregation of savages entered suddenly a wonderful man, completely in the confidence of their God, whom he treated colloquially and exploited very much as a newspaper reporter would exploit a foreign potentate. But, unlike the newspaper reporter, he never allowed his listeners to forget that he, and not He, was the centre of attraction. With a voice of silver and with imagery borrowed from the auction-room, he built up for his hearers a heaven on the lines of the Palmer House (but with all the gilding real gold, and all the plate-glass diamond), and set in the centre of it a loud-voiced, argumentative, very shrewd creation that he called God. One sentence at this point caught my delighted ear. It was apropos of some question of the Judgment, and ran: —"No! I tell you God doesn't do business that way."

He was giving them a deity whom they could comprehend, and a gold and jewelled heaven in which they could take a natural interest. He interlarded his performance with the slang of the streets, the counter, and the exchange, and he said that religion ought to enter into daily life. Consequently, I presume he introduced it as daily life—his own and the life of his friends.

Then I escaped before the blessing, desiring no benediction at such hands. But the persons who listened seemed to enjoy themselves, and I understood that I had met with a popular preacher.

Later on, when I had perused the sermons of a gentleman called Talmage and some others, I perceived that I had been listening to a very mild specimen. Yet that man, with his brutal gold and silver idols, his hands-in-pocket, cigar-in-mouth, and hat-on-the-back-of-the-head style of dealing with the sacred vessels, would count himself, spiritually, quite competent to send a mission to convert the Indians.

All that Sunday I listened to people who said that the mere fact of spiking down strips of iron to wood, and getting a steam and iron thing to run along them was progress, that the telephone was progress, and the network of wires overhead was progress. They repeated their statements again and again.

One of them took me to their City Hall and Board of Trade works, and pointed it out with pride. It was very ugly, but very big, and the streets in front of it were narrow and unclean. When I saw the faces of the men who did business in that building, I felt that there had been a mistake in their billeting.

By the way, 'tis a consolation to feel that I am not writing to an English audience. Then I should have to fall into feigned ecstasies over the marvellous progress of Chicago since the days of the great fire, to allude casually to the raising of the entire city so many feet above the level of the lake which it faces, and generally to grovel before the golden calf. But you, who are desperately poor, and therefore by these standards of no account, know things, will understand when I write that they have managed to get a million of men together on flat land, and that the bulk of these men together appear to be lower than Mahajans and not so companionable as a Punjabi Jat after harvest.

But I don't think it was the blind hurry of the people, their argot, and their grand ignorance of things beyond their immediate interests that displeased me so much as a study of the daily papers of Chicago.

Imprimis, there was some sort of a dispute between New York and Chicago as to which town should give an exhibition of products to be hereafter holden, and through the medium of their more dignified journals the two cities were yahooing and hi-yi-ing at each other like opposition newsboys. They called it humor, but it sounded like something quite different.

That was only the first trouble. The second lay in the tone of the productions. Leading articles which include gems such as "Back of such and such a place," or, "We noticed, Tuesday, such an event," or, "don't" for "does not," are things to be accepted with thankfulness. All that made me want to cry was that in these papers were faithfully reproduced all the war-

cries and "back-talk" of the Palmer House bar, the slang of the barber-shops, the mental elevation and integrity of the Pullman car porter, the dignity of the dime museum, and the accuracy of the excited fish-wife. I am sternly forbidden to believe that the paper educates the public. Then I am compelled to believe that the public educate the paper; yet suicides on the press are rare.

Just when the sense of unreality and oppression was strongest upon me, and when I most wanted help, a man sat at my side and began to talk what he called politics.

I had chanced to pay about six shillings for a travelling-cap worth eighteen-pence, and he made of the fact a text for a sermon. He said that this was a rich country, and that the people liked to pay two hundred per cent, on the value of a thing. They could afford it. He said that the government imposed a protective duty of from ten to seventy per cent on foreign-made articles, and that the American manufacturer consequently could sell his goods for a healthy sum. Thus an imported hat would, with duty, cost two guineas. The American manufacturer would make a hat for seventeen shillings, and sell it for one pound fifteen. In these things, he said, lay the greatness of America and the effeteness of England. Competition between factory and factory kept the prices down to decent limits, but I was never to forget that this people were a rich people, not like the pauper Continentals, and that they enjoyed paying duties.

To my weak intellect this seemed rather like juggling with counters. Everything that I have yet purchased costs about twice as much as it would in England, and when native made is of inferior quality.

Moreover, since these lines were first thought of, I have visited a gentleman who owned a factory which used to produce things. He owned the factory still. Not a man was in it, but he was drawing a handsome income from a syndicate of firms for keeping it closed, in order that it might not produce things. This man said that if protection were abandoned, a tide of pauper labor would flood the country, and as I looked at his factory I thought how entirely better it was to have no labor of any kind whatever rather than face so horrible a future.

Meantime, do you remember that this peculiar country enjoys paying money for value not received? I am an alien, and for the life of me I cannot see why six shillings should be paid for eighteen-penny caps, or eight shillings for half-crown cigar-cases. When the country fills up to a decently populated level a few million people who are not aliens will be smitten with the same sort of blindness.

But my friend's assertion somehow thoroughly suited the grotesque ferocity of Chicago.

See now and judge! In the village of Isser Jang, on the road to Montgomery, there be four Changar women who winnow corn—some seventy bushels a year. Beyond their hut lives Purun Dass, the money-lender, who on good security lends as much as five thousand rupees in a year. Jowala Singh, the smith, mends the village plows—some thirty, broken at the share, in three hundred and sixty-five days; and Hukm Chund, who is letter-writer and head of the little club under the travellers' tree, generally keeps the village posted in such gossip as the barber and the mid-wife have not yet made public property.

Chicago husks and winnows her wheat by the million bushels, a hundred banks lend hundreds of millions of dollars in the year, and scores of factories turn out plow-gear and machinery by steam. Scores of daily papers do work which Hukm Chund and the barber and the midwife perform, with due regard for public opinion, in the village of Isser Jang. So far as manufactories go, the difference between Chicago on the lake, and Isser Jang on the Montgomery road, is one of degree only, and not of kind. As far as the understanding of the uses of life goes, Isser Jang, for all its seasonal cholers, has the advantage over Chicago.

Jowala Singh knows and takes care to avoid the three or four ghoul-haunted fields on the outskirts of the village; but he is not urged by millions of devils to run about all day in the sun and swear that his plowshares are the best in the Punjab; nor does Purun Dass fly forth in an ekka more than once or twice a year, and he knows, on a pinch, how to use the railway and the telegraph as well as any son of Israel in Chicago. But this is absurd.

The East is not the West, and these men must continue to deal with the machinery of life, and to call it progress. Their very preachers dare not rebuke them. They gloss over the hunting for money and the thrice-sharpened bitterness of Adam's curse, by saying that such things dower a man with a larger range of thoughts and higher aspirations. They do not say, "Free yourselves from your own slavery," but rather, "If you can possibly manage it, do not set quite so much store on the things of this world."

And they do not know what the things of this world are!

I went off to see cattle killed, by way of clearing my head, which, as you will perceive, was getting muddled. They say every Englishman goes to the Chicago stock-yards. You shall find them about six miles from the city; and once having seen them, you will never forget the sight.

As far as the eye can reach stretches a town-ship of cattle-pens, cunningly divided into blocks, so that the animals of any pen can be speedily driven out close to an inclined timber path which leads to an elevated covered way straddling high above the pens. These viaducts are two-storied. On the upper story tramp the doomed cattle, stolidly for the most part. On the lower, with a scuffling of sharp hoofs and multitudinous yells, run the pigs, the same end being appointed for each. Thus you will see the gangs of cattle waiting their turn—as they wait sometimes for days; and they need not be distressed by the sight of their fellows running about in the fear of death. All they know is that a man on horseback causes their next-door neighbors to move by means of a whip. Certain bars and fences are unshipped, and behold! that crowd have gone up the mouth of a sloping tunnel and return no more.

It is different with the pigs. They shriek back the news of the exodus to their friends, and a hundred pens skirl responsive.

It was to the pigs I first addressed myself. Selecting a viaduct which was full of them, as I could hear, though I could not see, I marked a sombre building whereto it ran, and went there, not unalarmed by stray cattle who had managed to escape from their proper quarters. A pleasant smell of brine warned me of what was coming. I entered the factory and found it full of pork in barrels, and on another story more pork un-

barrelled, and in a huge room the halves of swine, for whose behoof great lumps of ice were being pitched in at the window. That room was the mortuary chamber where the pigs lay for a little while in state ere they began their progress through such passages as kings may sometimes travel.

Turning a corner, and not noting an overhead arrangement of greased rail, wheel, and pulley, I ran into the arms of four eviscerated carcasses, all pure white and of a human aspect, pushed by a man clad in vehement red. When I leaped aside, the floor was slippery under me. Also there was a flavor of farm-yard in my nostrils and the shouting of a multitude in my ears. But there was no joy in that shouting. Twelve men stood in two lines six a side. Between them and overhead ran the railway of death that had nearly shunted me through the window. Each man carried a knife, the sleeves of his shirt were cut off at the elbows, and from bosom to heel he was blood-red.

Beyond this perspective was a column of steam, and beyond that was where I worked my awe-struck way, unwilling to touch beam or wall. The atmosphere was stifling as a night in the rains by reason of the steam and the crowd. I climbed to the beginning of things and, perched upon a narrow beam, overlooked very nearly all the pigs ever bred in Wisconsin. They had just been shot out of the mouth of the viaduct and huddled together in a large pen. Thence they were flicked persuasively, a few at a time, into a smaller chamber, and there a man fixed tackle on their hinder legs, so that they rose in the air, suspended from the railway of death.

Oh! it was then they shrieked and called on their mothers, and made promises of amendment, till the tackle-man punted them in their backs and they slid head down into a brick-floored passage, very like a big kitchen sink, that was blood-red. There awaited them a red man with a knife, which he passed jauntily through their throats, and the full-voiced shriek became a splutter, and then a fall as of heavy tropical rain, and the red man, who was backed against the passage-wall, you will understand, stood clear of the wildly kicking hoofs and passed his hand over his eyes, not from any feeling of compassion, but because the spurted blood was in his eyes, and he had barely time to stick the next arrival. Then that first stuck swine dropped, still kicking, into a great vat of boiling water, and

spoke no more words, but wallowed in obedience to some unseen machinery, and presently came forth at the lower end of the vat, and was heaved on the blades of a blunt paddle-wheel, things which said "Hough, hough, hough!" and skelped all the hair off him, except what little a couple of men with knives could remove.

Then he was again hitched by the heels to that said railway, and passed down the line of the twelve men, each man with a knife—losing with each man a certain amount of his individuality, which was taken away in a wheel-barrow, and when he reached the last man he was very beautiful to behold, but excessively unstuffed and limp. Preponderance of individuality was ever a bar to foreign travel. That pig could have been in case to visit you in India had he not parted with some of his most cherished notions.

The dissecting part impressed me not so much as the slaying. They were so excessively alive, these pigs. And then, they were so excessively dead, and the man in the dripping, clammy, not passage did not seem to care, and ere the blood of such a one had ceased to foam on the floor, such another and four friends with him had shrieked and died. But a pig is only the unclean animal—the forbidden of the prophet.

VI. THE AMERICAN ARMY

I SHOULD very much like to deliver a dissertation on the American army and the possibilities of its extension. You see, it is such a beautiful little army, and the dear people don't quite understand what to do with it. The theory is that it is an instructional nucleus round which the militia of the country will rally, and from which they will get a stiffening in time of danger. Yet other people consider that the army should be built, like a pair of lazy tongs—on the principle of elasticity and extension—so that in time of need it may fill up its skeleton battalions and empty saddle troops. This is real wisdom, be-cause the American army, as at present constituted, is made up of:—Twenty-five regiments infantry, ten companies each.

Ten regiments cavalry, twelve companies each.

Five regiments artillery, twelve companies each.

Now there is a notion in the air to reorganize the service on these lines:—Eighteen regiments infantry at four battalions, four companies each; third battalion, skeleton; fourth on paper.

Eight regiments cavalry at four battalions, four troops each; third battalion, skeleton; fourth on paper.

Five regiments artillery at four battalions, four companies each; third battalion, skeleton; fourth on paper.

Observe the beauty of this business. The third battalion will have its officers, but no men; the fourth will probably have a rendezvous and some equipment.

It is not contemplated to give it anything more definite at present. Assuming the regiments to be made up to full complement, we get an army of fifty thousand men, which after the need passes away must be cut down fifty per cent, to the huge delight of the officers.

The military needs of the States be three: (a) Frontier warfare, an employment well within the grip of the present army of twenty-five thousand, and in the nature of things growing less arduous year by year; (b) internal riots and commotions which rise up like a dust devil, whirl furiously, and die out long before the authorities at Washington could begin to fill up even the third skeleton battalions, much less hunt about for material for the fourth; (c) civil war, in which, as the case in the affair of the North and South, the regular army would be swamped in the mass of militia and armed volunteers would turn the land into a hell.

Yet the authorities persist in regarding an external war as a thing to be seriously considered.

The Power that would disembark troops on American soil would be capable of heaving a shovelful of mud into the Atlantic in the hope of filling it up. Consequently, the authorities are fascinated with the idea of the sliding scale or concertina army. This is an hereditary instinct, for you know that when we English have got together two companies, one machine gun, a sick bullock, forty generals, and a mass of W. O. forms, we say we possess "an army corps capable of indefinite extension."

The American army is a beautiful little army. Some day, when all the Indians are happily dead or drunk, it ought to make the finest scientific and survey corps that the world has ever seen; it does excellent work now, but there is this defect in its nature: It is officered, as you know, from West Point.

The mischief of it is that West Point seems to be created for the purpose of spreading a general knowledge of military matters among the people. A boy goes up to that institution, gets his pass, and returns to civil life, so they tell me, with a dangerous knowledge that he is a suckling Von Moltke, and may apply his learning when occasion offers. Given trouble, that man will be a nuisance, because he is a hideously versatile American, to begin with, as cock-sure of himself as a man can be, and with all the racial disregard for human life to back him, through any demi-semi-professional generalship.

In a country where, as the records of the daily papers show, men engaged in a conflict with police or jails are all too ready to adopt a

military formation and get heavily shot in a sort of cheap, half-constructed warfare, instead of being decently scared by the appearance of the military, this sort of arrangement does not seem wise.

The bond between the States is of an amazing tenuity. So long as they do not absolutely march into the District of Columbia, sit on the Washington statues, and invent a flag of their own, they can legislate, lynch, hunt negroes through swamps, divorce, railroad, and rampage as much as ever they choose. They do not need knowledge of their own military strength to back their genial lawlessness.

That regular army, which is a dear little army, should be kept to itself, blooded on detachment duty, turned into the paths of science, and now and again assembled at feasts of Free Masons, and so forth.

It is too tiny to be a political power. The immortal wreck of the Grand Army of the Republic is a political power of the largest and most unblushing description. It ought not to help to lay the foundations of an amateur military power that is blind and irresponsible.

By great good luck the evil-minded train, already delayed twelve hours by a burned bridge, brought me to the city on a Saturday by way of that valley which the Mormons, over their efforts, had caused to blossom like the rose. Twelve hours previously I had entered into a new world where, in conversation, every one was either a Mormon or a Gentile. It is not seemly for a free and independent citizen to dub himself a Gentile, but the Mayor of Ogden—which is the Gentile city of the valley—told me that there must be some distinction between the two flocks.

Long before the fruit orchards of Logan or the shining levels of the Salt Lake had been reached, that mayor—himself a Gentile, and one renowned for his dealings with the Mormons—told me that the great question of the existence of the power within the power was being gradually solved by the ballot and by education.

All the beauty of the valley could not make me forget it. And the valley is very fair. Bench after bench of land, flat as a table against the flanks of the ringing hills, marks where the Salt Lake rested for awhile in its collapse from an inland sea to a lake fifty miles long and thirty broad.

There are the makings of a very fine creed about Mormonism. To begin with, the Church is rather more absolute than that of Rome. Drop the polygamy plank in the platform, but on the other hand deal lightly with certain forms of excess; keep the quality of the recruit down to the low mental level, and see that the best of all the agricultural science available is in the hands of the elders, and there you have a first-class engine for pioneer work. The tawdry mysticism and the borrowing from Freemasonry serve the low caste Swede and Dane, the Welshman and the Cornish cotter, just as well as a highly organized heaven.

Then I went about the streets and peeped into people's front windows, and the decorations upon the tables were after the manner of the year 1850. Main Street was full of country folk from the desert, come in to trade with the Zion Mercantile Co-operative Institute. The Church, I fancy, looks after the finances of this thing, and it consequently pays good dividends.

The faces of the women were not lovely. In-deed, but for the certainty that ugly persons are just as irrational in the matter of undivided love as the beautiful, it seems that polygamy was a blessed institution for the women, and that only the dread threats of the spiritual power could drive the hulking, board-faced men into it. The women wore hideous garments, and the men appeared to be tied up with strings.

They would market all that afternoon, and on Sunday go to the praying-place. I tried to talk to a few of them, but they spoke strange tongues, and stared and behaved like cows. Yet one woman, and not an altogether ugly one, confided to me that she hated the idea of Salt Lake City being turned into a show-place for the amusement of the Gentiles.

"If we 'have our own institutions, that ain't no reason why people should come 'ere and stare at us, his it?"

The dropped "h" betrayed her.

"And when did you leave England?" I said.

"Summer of '84. I am Dorset," she said. "The Mormon agent was very good to us, and we was very poor. Now we're better off—my father, an' mother, an' me."

"Then you like the State?"

She misunderstood at first.

"Oh, I ain't livin' in the state of polygamy. Not me, yet. I ain't married. I like where I am. I've got things o' my own—and some land."

"But I suppose you will—"

"Not me. I ain't like them Swedes an' Danes. I ain't got nothin' to say for or against polygamy. It's the elders' business, an' between you an' me, I don't think it's going on much longer. You'll 'ear them in the 'ouse to-morrer talkin' as if it was spreadin' all over America. The Swedes, they think it his. I know it hisn't."

"But you've got your land all right?"

"Oh, yes; we've got our land, an' we never say aught against polygamy, o' course—father, an' mother, an' me."

On a table-land overlooking all the city stands the United States garrison of infantry and artillery. The State of Utah can do nearly anything it pleases until that much-to-be-desired hour when the Gentile vote shall quietly swamp out Mormonism; but the garrison is kept there in case of accidents. The big, shark-mouthed, pig-eared, heavy-boned farmers sometimes take to their creed with wildest fanaticism, and in past years have made life excessively unpleasant for the Gentile when he was few in the land. But to-day, so far from killing openly or secretly, or burning Gentile farms, it is all the Mormon dare do to feebly try to boycott the interloper. His journals preach defiance to the United States Government, and in the Tabernacle on a Sunday the preachers follow suit.

When I went there, the place was full of people who would have been much better for a washing.

A man rose up and told them that they were the chosen of God, the elect of Israel; that they were to obey their priests, and that there was a good time coming. I fancy that they had heard all this before so many times it produced no impression whatever, even as the sublimest mysteries of another faith lose salt through constant iteration. They breathed heavily

through their noses, and stared straight in front of them—impassive as flat fish.

VII. AMERICA'S DEFENCELESS COASTS

JUST suppose that America were twenty days distant from England. Then a man could study its customs with undivided soul; but being so very near next door, he goes about the land with one eye on the smoke of the flesh-pots of the old country across the seas, while with the other he squints biliously and prejudicially at the alien.

I can lay my hand upon my sacred heart and affirm that up to to-day I have never taken three consecutive trips by rail without being delayed by an accident. That it was an accident to another train makes no difference. My own turn may come next.

A few miles from peaceful, pleasure-loving Lakewood they had managed to upset an express goods train to the detriment of the flimsy permanent way; and thus the train which should have left at three departed at seven in the evening. I was not angry. I was scarcely even interested. When an American train starts on time I begin to anticipate disaster—a visitation for such good luck, you understand.

Buffalo is a large village of a quarter of a million inhabitants, situated on the seashore, which is falsely called Lake Erie. It is a peaceful place, and more like an English county town than most of its friends.

Once clear of the main business streets, you launch upon miles and miles of asphalted roads running between cottages and cut-stone residences of those who have money and peace. All the Eastern cities own this fringe of elegance, but except in Chicago nowhere is the fringe deeper or more heavily widened than in Buffalo.

The American will go to a bad place because he cannot speak English, and is proud of it; but he knows how to make a home for himself and his mate, knows how to keep the grass green in front of his veranda, and how to fullest use the mechanism of life—hot water, gas, good bell-ropes, telephones, etc. His shops sell him delightful household fitments at very moderate rates, and he is encompassed with all manner of labor-saving

appliances. This does not prevent his wife and his daughter working themselves to death over household drudgery; but the intention is good.

When you have seen the outside of a few hundred thousand of these homes and the insides of a few score, you begin to understand why the American (the respectable one) does not take a deep interest in what they call "politics," and why he is so vaguely and generally proud of the country that enables him to be so comfortable. How can the owner of a dainty chalet, with smoked-oak furniture, imitation Venetian tapestry curtains, hot and cold water laid on, a bed of geraniums and hollyhocks, a baby crawling down the veranda, and a self-acting twirly-whirly hose gently hissing over the grass in the balmy dusk of an August evening—how can such a man despair of the Republic, or descend into the streets on voting days and mix cheerfully with "the boys"?

No, it is the stranger—the homeless jackal of a stranger—whose interest in the country is limited to his hotel-bill and a railway-ticket, that can run from Dan to Beersheba, crying:—"All is barren!"

Every good American wants a home—a pretty house and a little piece of land of his very own; and every other good American seems to get it.

It was when my gigantic intellect was grappling with this question that I confirmed a discovery half made in the West. The natives of most classes marry young—absurdly young. One of my informants—not the twenty-two-year-old husband I met on Lake Chautauqua—said that from twenty to twenty-four was about the usual time for this folly. And when I asked whether the practice was confined to the constitutionally improvident classes, he said "No" very quickly. He said it was a general custom, and nobody saw anything wrong with it.

"I guess, perhaps, very early marriage may account for a good deal of the divorce," said he, reflectively.

Whereat I was silent. Their marriages and their divorces only concern these people; and neither I travelling, nor you, who may come after, have any right to make rude remarks about them. Only—only coming from a land where a man begins to lightly turn to thoughts of love not before he is thirty, I own that playing at house-keeping before that age rather surprised

me. Out in the West, though, they marry, boys and girls, from sixteen upward, and I have met more than one bride of fifteen—husband aged twenty.

"When man and woman are agreed, what can the Kazi do?"

From those peaceful homes, and the envy they inspire (two trunks and a walking-stick and a bit of pine forest in British Columbia are not satisfactory, any way you look at them), I turned me to the lake front of Buffalo, where the steamers bellow to the grain elevators, and the locomotives yell to the coal-shutes, and the canal barges jostle the lumber-raft half a mile long as it snakes across the water in tow of a launch, and earth, and sky, and sea alike are thick with smoke.

In the old days, before the railway ran into the city, all the business quarters fringed the lake-shore where the traffic was largest. To-day the business quarters have gone up-town to meet the railroad; the lake traffic still exists, but you shall find a narrow belt of red-brick desolation, broken windows, gap-toothed doors, and streets where the grass grows between the crowded wharves and the bustling city. To the lake front comes wheat from Chicago, lumber, coal, and ore, and a large trade in cheap excursionists.

It was my felicity to catch a grain steamer and an elevator emptying that same steamer. The steamer might have been two thousand tons burden. She was laden with wheat in bulk; from stem to stern, thirteen feet deep, lay the clean, red wheat. There was no twenty-five per cent dirt admixture about it at all. It was wheat, fit for the grindstones as it lay. They manoeuvred the fore-hatch of that steamer directly under an elevator—a house of red tin a hundred and fifty feet high. Then they let down into that fore-hatch a trunk as if it had been the trunk of an elephant, but stiff, because it was a pipe of iron-champed wood. And the trunk had a steel-shod nose to it, and contained an endless chain of steel buckets.

Then the captain swore, raising his eyes to heaven, and a gruff voice answered him from the place he swore at, and certain machinery, also in the firmament, began to clack, and the glittering, steel-shod nose of that trunk burrowed into the wheat, and the wheat quivered and sunk upon the instant as water sinks when the siphon sucks, because the steel buckets

within the trunk were flying upon their endless round, carrying away each its appointed morsel of wheat.

The elevator was a Persian well wheel—a wheel squashed out thin and cased in a pipe, a wheel driven not by bullocks, but by much horse-power, licking up the grain at the rate of thou-sands of bushels the hour. And the wheat sunk into the fore-hatch while a man looked—sunk till the brown timbers of the bulkheads showed bare, and men leaped down through clouds of golden dust and shovelled the wheat furiously round the nose of the trunk, and got a steam-shovel of glittering steel and made that shovel also, till there remained of the grain not more than a horse leaves in the fold of his nose-bag.

In this manner do they handle wheat at Buffalo. On one side of the elevator is the steamer, on the other the railway track; and the wheat is loaded into the cars in bulk. Wah! wah! God is great, and I do not think He ever intended Gar Sahai or Luckman Narain to supply England with her wheat. India can cut in not without profit to herself when her harvest is good and the American yield poor; but this very big country can, upon the average, supply the earth with all the beef and bread that is required.

A man in the train said to me:—"We kin feed all the earth, jest as easily as we kin whip all the earth."

Now the second statement is as false as the first is true. One of these days the respectable Republic will find this out.

Unfortunately we, the English, will never be the people to teach her; because she is a chartered libertine allowed to say and do anything she likes, from demanding the head of the empress in an editorial waste-basket, to chevying Canadian schooners up and down the Alaska Seas. It is perfectly impossible to go to war with these people, whatever they may do.

They are much too nice, in the first place, and in the second, it would throw out all the passenger traffic of the Atlantic, and upset the financial arrangements of the English syndicates who have invested their money in breweries, railways, and the like, and in the third, it's not to be done. Everybody knows that, and no one better than the American.

Yet there are other powers who are not "ohai band" (of the brotherhood)—China, for instance. Try to believe an irresponsible writer when he assures you that China's fleet to-day, if properly manned, could waft the entire American navy out of the water and into the blue. The big, fat Republic that is afraid of nothing, because nothing up to the present date has happened to make her afraid, is as unprotected as a jelly-fish. Not internally, of course—it would be madness for any Power to throw men into America; they would die—but as far as regards coast defence.

From five miles out at sea (I have seen a test of her "fortified" ports) a ship of the power of H. M. S. "Collingwood" (they haven't run her on a rock yet) would wipe out any or every town from San Francisco to Long Branch; and three first-class ironclads would account for New York, Bartholdi's Statue and all.

Reflect on this. 'Twould be "Pay up or go up" round the entire coast of the United States. To this furiously answers the patriotic American:—"We should not pay. We should invent a Columbiad in Pittsburg or—or anywhere else, and blow any outsider into h—l."

They might invent. They might lay waste their cities and retire inland, for they can subsist entirely on their own produce. Meantime, in a war waged the only way it could be waged by an unscrupulous Power, their coast cities and their dock-yards would be ashes. They could construct their navy inland if they liked, but you could never bring a ship down to the water-ways, as they stand now.

They could not, with an ordinary water patrol, despatch one regiment of men six miles across the seas. There would be about five million excessively angry, armed men pent up within American limits. These men would require ships to get themselves afloat. The country has no such ships, and until the ships were built New York need not be allowed a single-wheeled carriage within her limits.

Behold now the glorious condition of this Republic which has no fear. There is ransom and loot past the counting of man on her seaboard alone—plunder that would enrich a nation—and she has neither a navy nor half a dozen first-class ports to guard the whole. No man catches a snake by the

tail, because the creature will sting; but you can build a fire around a snake that will make it squirm.

The country is supposed to be building a navy now. When the ships are completed her alliance will be worth having—if the alliance of any republic can be relied upon. For the next three years she can be hurt, and badly hurt. Pity it is that she is of our own blood, looking at the matter from a Pindarris point of view. Dog cannot eat dog.

These sinful reflections were prompted by the sight of the beautifully unprotected condition of Buffalo—a city that could be made to pay up five million dollars without feeling it. There are her companies of infantry in a sort of port there. A gun-boat brought over in pieces from Niagara could get the money and get away before she could be caught, while an unarmored gun-boat guarding Toronto could ravage the towns on the lakes. When one hears so much of the nation that can whip the earth, it is, to say the least of it, surprising to find her so temptingly spankable.

The average American citizen seems to have a notion that any Power engaged in strife with the Star Spangled Banner will disembark men from flat-bottomed boats on a convenient beach for the purpose of being shot down by local militia. In his own simple phraseology:—"Not by a darned sight. No, sir."

Ransom at long range will be about the size of it—cash or crash.

Let us revisit calmer scenes.

In the heart of Buffalo there stands a magnificent building which the population do innocently style a music-hall. Everybody comes here of evenings to sit around little tables and listen to a first-class orchestra. The place is something like the Gaiety Theatre at Simla, enlarged twenty times. The "Light Brigade" of Buffalo occupy the boxes and the stage, "as it was at Simla in the days of old," and the others sit in the parquet. Here I went with a friend—poor or boor is the man who cannot pick up a friend for a season in America—and here was shown the really smart folk of the city. I grieve to say I laughed, because when an American wishes to be correct he sets himself to imitate the Englishman. This he does vilely, and

earns not only the contempt of his brethren, but the amused scorn of the Briton.

I saw one man who was pointed out to me as being the glass of fashion hereabouts. He was aggressively English in his get-up. From eye-glass to trouser-hem the illusion was perfect, but—he wore with evening-dress buttoned boots with brown cloth tops! Not till I wandered about this land did I understand why the comic papers belabor the Anglomaniac.

Certain young men of the more idiotic sort launch into dog-carts and raiment of English cut, and here in Buffalo they play polo at four in the afternoon. I saw three youths come down to the polo-ground faultlessly attired for the game and mounted on their best ponies. Expecting a game, I lingered; but I was mistaken. These three shining ones with the very new yellow hide boots and the red silk sashes had assembled themselves for the purpose of knocking the ball about. They smote with great solemnity up and down the grounds, while the little boys looked on. When they trotted, which was not seldom, they rose and sunk in their stirrups with a conscientiousness that cried out "Riding-school!" from afar.

Other young men in the park were riding after the English manner, in neatly cut riding-trousers and light saddles. Fate in derision had made each youth bedizen his animal with a checkered enamelled leather brow-band visible half a mile away—a black-and-white checkered brow-band! They can't do it, any more than an Englishman, by taking cold, can add that indescribable nasal twang to his orchestra.

The other sight of the evening was a horror. The little tragedy played itself out at a neighboring table where two very young men and two very young women were sitting. It did not strike me till far into the evening that the pimply young reprobates were making the girls drunk. They gave them red wine and then white, and the voices rose slightly with the maidens' cheek flushes. I watched, wishing to stay, and the youths drank till their speech thickened and their eye-balls grew watery. It was sickening to see, because I knew what was going to happen. My friend eyed the group, and said:—"Maybe they're children of respectable people. I hardly think, though, they'd be allowed out without any better escort than these boys. And yet the place is a place where every one comes, as you see. They may

be Little Immoralities—in which case they wouldn't be so hopelessly overcome with two glasses of wine. They may be—"

Whatever they were they got indubitably drunk—there in that lovely hall, surrounded by the best of Buffalo society. One could do nothing except invoke the judgment of Heaven on the two boys, themselves half sick with liquor. At the close of the performance the quieter maiden laughed vacantly and protested she couldn't keep her feet. The four linked arms, and staggering, flickered out into the street—drunk, gentlemen and ladies, as Davy's swine, drunk as lords! They disappeared down a side avenue, but I could hear their laughter long after they were out of sight.

And they were all four children of sixteen and seventeen. Then, recanting previous opinions, I became a prohibitionist. Better it is that a man should go without his beer in public places, and content himself with swearing at the narrow-mindedness of the majority; better it is to poison the inside with very vile temperance drinks, and to buy lager furtively at back-doors, than to bring temptation to the lips of young fools such as the four I had seen. I understand now why the preachers rage against drink. I have said: "There is no harm in it, taken moderately;" and yet my own demand for beer helped directly to send those two girls reeling down the dark street to—God alone knows what end.

If liquor is worth drinking, it is worth taking a little trouble to come at—such trouble as a man will undergo to compass his own desires. It is not good that we should let it lie before the eyes of children, and I have been a fool in writing to the contrary. Very sorry for myself, I sought a hotel, and found in the hall a reporter who wished to know what I thought of the country. Him I lured into conversation about his own profession, and from him gained much that confirmed me in my views of the grinding tyranny of that thing which they call the Press here. Thus:—I—But you talk about interviewing people whether they like it or not. Have you no bounds beyond which even your indecent curiosity must not go?

HE—I haven't struck 'em yet. What do you think of interviewing a widow two hours after her husband's death, to get her version of his life?

I—I think that is the work of a ghoul. Must the people have no privacy?

HE—There is no domestic privacy in America. If there was, what the deuce would the papers do? See here. Some time ago I had an assignment to write up the floral tributes when a prominent citizen had died.

I—Translate, please; I do not understand your pagan rites and ceremonies.

HE—I was ordered by the office to describe the flowers, and wreaths, and so on, that had been sent to a dead man's funeral. Well, I went to the house. There was no one there to stop me, so I yanked the tinkler—pulled the bell—and drifted into the room where the corpse lay all among the roses and smilax. I whipped out my note-book and pawed around among the floral tributes, turn-ing up the tickets on the wreaths and seeing who had sent them. In the middle of this I heard some one saying: "Please, oh, please!" behind me, and there stood the daughter of the house, just bathed in tears—I—You unmitigated brute!

HE—Pretty much what I felt myself. "I'm very sorry, miss," I said, "to intrude on the privacy of your grief. Trust me, I shall make it as little painful as possible."

I—But by what conceivable right did you outrage—HE—Hold your horses. I'm telling you. Well, she didn't want me in the house at all, and between her sobs fairly waved me away. I had half the tributes described, though, and the balance I did partly on the steps when the stiff 'un came out, and partly in the church. The preacher gave the sermon. That wasn't my assignment. I skipped about among the floral tributes while he was talking. I could have made no excuse if I had gone back to the office and said that a pretty girl's sobs had stopped me obeying orders. I had to do it. What do you think of it all?

I (slowly)—Do you want to know?

HE (with his note-book ready)—Of course. How do you regard it?

I—It makes me regard your interesting nation with the same shuddering curiosity that I should bestow on a Pappan cannibal chewing the scalp off his mother's skull. Does that convey any idea to your mind? It makes me regard the whole pack of you as heathens—real heathens—not the sort you send missions to—creatures of another flesh and blood. You ought to have

been shot, not dead, but through the stomach, for your share in the scandalous business, and the thing you call your newspaper ought to have been sacked by the mob, and the managing proprietor hanged.

HE—From which, I suppose you have nothing of that kind in your country?

Oh! "Pioneer," venerable "Pioneer," and you not less honest press of India, who are occasionally dull but never blackguardly, what could I say? A mere "No," shouted never so loudly, would not have met the needs of the case. I said no word.

The reporter went away, and I took a train for Niagara Falls, which are twenty-two miles distant from this bad town, where girls get drunk of nights and reporters trample on corpses in the drawing-rooms of the brave and the free!